

# THE GRAMOPHONE

London Office:  
58, Frith Street,  
London, W.1.

Edited by  
COMPTON MACKENZIE

TELEPHONE: Regent 1383

Vol. III.

JULY, 1925

No. 2

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## THE TESTS

AT the moment of going to press there are still a very few of the five hundred tickets for the Tests left, and if any reader finds at the last moment that he or she can spare the evening of Thursday, July 9th, for gramophone matters, it is worth while to write or telephone to the London Office. It will be a long evening but it promises to be very interesting and not intolerably fatiguing.

The doors will be open at 5.30, but the tests will not begin till 6 p.m. The competing machines—about ten of them—will be on the stage, unconcealed by any curtains or screens. The audience will receive voting cards and will be the sole judges of the tests. Each competitor will be given six minutes in which to play any records or parts of records that he chooses—but one must be vocal and the other orchestral—with his own choice of needle.

Following this first test there will be an interval till 9 p.m., during which there will be a short concert at which Miss Marie Novello, fresh from her triumphs with the Lamoureux Orchestra in Paris, has promised to play the piano; the Music Society String Quartet will play the Orlando Gibbons *Fantasies* and Eugène Goossens's *By the Tarn* and *Jack o'*

*Lantern*, to which reference was made in the N.G.S. notes last month; and Miss Helen Henschel and Mr. John Goss will sing some of the duets and solos which made their recital at the Wigmore Hall on June 11th so memorable an occasion. We must offer our thanks in advance to all these artists for the readiness with which they have accepted our invitation. It is overwhelmingly kind of them.

The second test will begin at 9 p.m., and the competitors will play records selected by the Editor. It is hoped that the proceedings will end at about 10.30 p.m.

Light refreshments will be obtainable in an adjoining room.

The actual names of the competitors are not yet settled; but they range from the Peter Pan to the Vocarola, and as the object of the tests is to decide which is the *best value for money* the critical judgment of the audience will be put to the test as rigorously as the machines themselves! The three medals—gold, silver, and bronze—designed and struck by the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Company for THE GRAMOPHONE, will be awarded by the votes—first, second, and third.

*Particulars of the GRAMOPHONE CONGRESS are on page 79.*



# THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

## Opera at Covent Garden

IT has been a very busy season—so busy, in fact, that I fear I have had no time to spare for the legitimate gramophone work which I owe to the readers of this magazine, and comparatively little for the collection of really interesting material concerning the first or German half of the performances at the Royal Opera. The fact which stands out in clearest prominence with regard to the latter is that its financial success has far surpassed the most sanguine expectations of its backers, and has put into the shade all experiences during the regular grand season at this house since before the War. Night after night, for five nights in the week, the demand for seats has been extraordinarily large—large enough, indeed, to fill the big theatre very nearly or quite to “capacity.” The public appetite for the German representations seemed to grow with what it fed upon, and, when they reached their allotted span by the middle of June, I imagine the new *entrepreneurs* must have felt some qualms of regret that they had not opened their campaign a fortnight or so earlier. For all that, it must not be too readily assumed that they had so far succeeded in making ends meet. Opera on the “international” scale is a vastly expensive business; the outlay that has to be incurred for so short a period, with artists all demanding tip-top terms, makes the idea of profit practically out of the question. To cover expenses under such conditions is really an achievement, and the most that can be hoped for.

What the future may have in store is another question. I am quite prepared for a big development next year. As America has plainly shown us, unlimited capital and a direction with a clearly-defined policy can accomplish wonderful things where opera of the international type is concerned. After the encouragement vouchsafed the present Covent Garden undertaking we may confidently expect a considerable extension next year—probably twelve or even sixteen weeks instead of only eight. If so, it is to be hoped that there will be no unnecessary economy in any particular department, especially one that has given rise to much adverse criticism during the recent German performances. I allude to the dearth of good German tenors.

By a happy chance, I was seated next to Herr Bruno Walter at the annual dinner of the Critics’

Circle, held at the Trocadero Restaurant on June 7th. Like the new musical knight, Sir Hamilton Harty, and many theatrical celebrities, the gifted conductor was among the distinguished guests whom the critics “delighted to honour” on that occasion, and I did not lose the opportunity to ask him a few questions. For instance, I wanted him to tell me whether, in his opinion, the Wagnerian tenors whom we had heard this season provided a fair sample of the best that Berlin, Vienna, Munich, or Dresden could supply at the present stage of Continental reconstruction? His reply was given without the slightest hesitation:

“By no means. How it has come about is not for me to say; but the fact remains that there are at this moment at least three, and possibly half a dozen, splendid *Helden* (=heroic) tenors in Germany and Austria, any one of whom is superior to those whom London has lately been hearing.” And then he went on to mention names; but as Herr Bruno Walter is a man whom I esteem for his personal qualities and charm no less than his outstanding ability as a great conductor, I have too much regard for him to violate his confidence beyond this point. Doubtless, too, the mistake will not be repeated another year. Herr Walter told me he had never had a better orchestra to conduct in all his career, or one that answered so quickly to the helm: “It was simply amazing what your English players accomplished in the short allowance of time for rehearsal at our disposal.” He was also warm in his admiration for the gifted sopranos and baritones of the company, and I agreed with him that they, most of any, preserved the high level of the great Continental artists who used to visit this country in the past to impersonate the leading characters in the operas of Wagner, Strauss, and other modern composers.

There is nothing to say here about the Strauss operas that has not been said before. I have no patience to write about *Elektra* and its horrors, and the cast of *Der Rosenkavalier* was virtually identical with that of last year. But one revival there was which, although the work itself was probably the most familiar of the lot, interested me in an especial degree because of the very pleasant memories that it brought back. I allude to that of *Lohengrin*. To begin with, it was the fiftieth anniversary, almost to a day, of the first production of Wagner’s opera in this country and at this very house. The



coincidence appeared to have escaped general notice; but it did not escape mine, for perhaps I was the only person—certainly the only critic—in the house who could claim to have been present on both occasions. Never can I forget that warm May night in 1875, when I sat perched up in the gallery, sharing my Novello octavo score with friends on either side, and yielding for the first time to the enchantment of music that sounded at once so new, strange, and beautiful. It was sung in Italian, the conductor was an Italian (Vianesi by name), and the cuts were huge. But what did that matter! The Italian chorus did not wander so much further from the key than the German one did now; nor was the French *Lohengrin* of yore, the gallant Nicolini who was to become the second husband of the incomparable Adelina Patti, nearly so disappointing as the tenor from beyond the Scheldt whom the Covent Garden swan (was it the same, I wonder?) tugged on to the scene in 1925. And our first Elsa?—none other than Dame Emma Albani, the talented French-Canadian songstress, who was then our most versatile and musicianly prima donna and soon to be the daughter-in-law of the eminent impresario of Covent Garden, Mr. Frederic Gye, and whose friends of to-day, by celebrating (without knowing it) this interesting jubilee with a supplementary benefit concert, had secured her tardy admission to the list of Dames of the Order of the British Empire at the good old age of 72!

Well, speaking without prejudice, I think I can honestly say that the fair Lotte Lehmann—lovely of voice, winsome of aspect, dignified of mien, admirable in her art—was not more wonderful in all these things than the Emma Albani of half a century ago. I preferred listening to this music in the original language, of course; and Lotte Lehmann is a singer who lets you hear every word that she has to utter; also, thanks to the absence of cuts, she gave us more of the part of Elsa than we are accustomed to hearing nowadays even at Covent Garden. But enough of comparisons, otherwise I shall go on indulging in them *ad infinitum*, even to the extent of contrasting the various members of the recent German casts and, regarding *Lohengrin*, of complaining because one of the greatest of Ortruds, Marie Olczewska, should have had to give way to a less gifted in the person of Bella Paaren. That's precisely where the shoe pinches—as Eva is supposed to say to Hans Sachs—in the short-season distribution of operatic rôles. The artists you would like to hear may all be in the company, but you cannot contrive to hook them all at once and include them in the cast of your own particular choice. I say no more about the Knight of the Swan, but, on the other hand, I have rarely heard since Edouard de Reszke a King Henry so smooth and sonorous, so dignified and

imposing in delivery, as Otto Helgers. The way he led off the prayer in the first act, with that magnificent bass of his, was quite exceptional. Emil Schipper is another artist of the first rank, and his Telramund, like his Wotan, reveals notable individuality of thought and style. I like studying his facial expression; it is, as it should be, the faithful index to the processes of his mind, and you can see (when the stage is not too dark, as at the opening of the second act of *Lohengrin*) the precise effect upon his disposition of scolding wives like Ortrud and Fricka. Moreover, he takes his "medicine" bravely, even though his resistance be weak, and so carries out Wagner's intention to the letter.

Another unpremeditated anniversary of the German season was the hundredth performance of *Tristan und Isolde* at Covent Garden on May 19th. The pity was that it should not have been more wholly worthy of the occasion; but with such an inadequate Tristan as Laurenz Hofer proved himself to be, the rare merits of artists like Gertrud Kappel (Isolde), Friedrich Schorr (Kurwenal), Maria Olczewska (Brangäne), and Richard Mayr (King Marke) could scarcely be enjoyed at their full value. I cannot put it better than did the able critic of *The Times* when he wrote of this tenor as very much below the average, and added that "the man who can sing the intimate melodies of the love duet and the monologues of the last act as though he were addressing a public meeting is not the Tristan we want to hear." On a subsequent night his place was taken by another "inadequate" tenor named Soot, who had been hurriedly brought over for the purpose by aeroplane; even so he was not to be inspired to great deeds by that superb Isolde, Frida Leider, than whom no more inspiring singer of this part has been heard since the famous Milka Ternina. To the constant *habitué* it was doubtless a no less constant source of interest to watch the respective methods of the two conductors, Herren Bruno Walter and Robert Heger, who divided pretty equally the labours of leadership. I had not previously seen the latter in the conductor's chair, and, truth to tell, I think he proved himself a most reliable and alert occupant thereof.

For instance, it was Robert Heger who directed the repetition of *Die Walküre* on June 3rd, and the amount of spirit that he infused into his beat produced a corresponding effect from those under him, especially in the more exciting moments of the second and third acts. The preliminary scene in Hunding's dwelling began a trifle slowly. Here one could feel that the cool, calm, but beautiful Sieglinde of Delia Reinhardt was taking an unusually long time to awaken to the touch of passion. In the end, however, she responded warmly enough to the call of a strange Siegmund, who was beginning to wake up at about the same psychological



moment. He was no other than that fine English tenor Morgan Kingston, who, called upon at short notice, did himself and his country immense credit. His clear, ringing tones and experienced art stood him in good stead in the love duet; and I admired him even more in the scene with Brünnhilde (Gertrude Kappel), where, apart from his poetic phrasing, the timbre of his voice conveyed just the right sombre feeling and sense of fatality. It was exactly the kind of "white" voice that one wants from Siegmund at the moment when the heavy hand of destiny is laid upon him. This was consequently a scene worthy of association with those between Wotan and Fricka and Wotan and Brünnhilde, whose admirable exponents I have already named.

The revival of *Der Fliegende Holländer* was worth the trouble, for the same reason that actuated Bayreuth years ago—because it embodies the most significant turning-point in the early Wagnerian development. But it is not one of the master's great works, and does not repay too frequent hearing. Not even a Frida Leider can sustain the interest of Senta beyond the limits of her big opportunity throughout the second act, where it both begins and ends. Still it is a privilege to hear a Dutchman with the wistful, romantic spirit of Emil Schipper, and to enjoy another proof of the rich versatility of Richard Mayr in a part so *ennuyant* as that of Daland. I cannot speak personally of *Die Meistersinger*, and I say this with genuine regret for more than one reason. I am told that the performances of it which came during the final fortnight afforded—save as to the part of Walther—well-nigh unalloyed delight.

#### THE ITALIAN SEASON.

On Monday, June 15th, Covent Garden began a brilliant display of new *prime donne*—new, that is, to us, but by no means new to contemporary fame in countries that spend more on opera than we do. Society was ready to acclaim the fresh arrivals, and did so in serried ranks, at any rate on the first two nights of "Ascot Week," which is as far as circumstances will allow this chronicle to extend. Well, after all the wonderful things that have been said about Toti dal Monte at La Scala, and Jeritza at Vienna and the New York Metropolitan, it was certainly interesting to see and hear them in the flesh; by which I mean to indicate, otherwise than through the medium of their gramophone records. The first-named, making her *début* in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, challenged every sort of comparison. She also made sure of a rich opportunity; every point was scored with the certainty and accuracy that come of ample experience. She has a pure soprano voice of fairly extended compass, with clear but occasionally hard head notes, and sings like an Italian born and trained. In the *Regnava nel*

*silenzio* we heard a smooth *legato*, a delicate *cantilena*, a crisp, pearly scale (not so perfect in chromatic as in diatonic passages), and brilliancy alike in the staccato and the shake. This air brought down the house; but somehow the sextet failed to do so, perhaps for lack of a big climax in the voices to match that of the brass and the big drum. Here, if anywhere, Lucia should wake up to the awful cruelty of her brother's deception, and depict the anger and despair that precede her insanity. But Toti dal Monte took the situation, so to speak, "lying down," sang prettily, and never attained an exciting moment. On the other hand, her "Mad Scene" was from first to last an elaborate conception, slow and deliberate in execution, replete with clever and often touching vocalisation, if not with brilliant flights or *tours de force* that could exactly be termed thrilling. She acted it well—indeed, acted well throughout—and altogether proved herself a highly accomplished stage artist. This, and not a great singer, is what I must describe her as being. The support was, on the whole, moderate. The tenor, Dino Borgioli, was without charm; he could not compare with the Edgardos of past days, who used to sing with Patti and Nilsson, Albani and Melba. The Enrico, Badini, was admittedly suffering from a cold, and the others were tolerably efficient. The conductor, Antonino Votto, acquitted himself ably of an easy task.

The triumph of Maria Jeritza in *Tosca* on the following evening was due as much to a winning personality and magnificent acting as to the effect of her ringing, powerful tones and genuinely dramatic singing. Here, as I fully expected, was an artist who could produce in the opera house a far deeper impression than that created by her gramophone achievements; therein differing from Toti dal Monte, who resembles Galli-Curci (and most other *coloratura* singers, I imagine) in that her records attain a higher level of vocal perfection than when she is facing an audience. But what a *Tosca*! What a combination of all the qualities, human and artistic, that go to the making of that many-sided creature! Jeritza is not exactly like any one of her great predecessors in this rôle. She unites, though, some of the strongest characteristics that distinguished each, and she brings them into sharp contrast with the adroitness and skill of a mistress of her art. Thus by turns she gives you the feline touches of Sarah Bernhardt, the feminine devotion of Ternina, the tempestuous passion of Destinn, the shrinking fear of Emma Eames. Tenderness alternates with jealousy in the church scene; anxiety, alarm, and resentment with burning rage, despair, and gloating, satisfied vengeance in the terrific duet with Scarpia. Then, after the prolonged physical struggle, whilst she is lying full length on the ground, her face distorted and her wonderful hair all dishevelled, she half murmurs, half weeps the



bitter plaint of *Vissi d'arte* with an intensity of emotion such as no Tosca off the stage has ever yet dared to put into a gramophone record. It was not in this air that she "forced" her tone, as has been suggested; but if she did so at all it was at certain moments in the tremendous episode when it was far more pardonable to over-stress the *fortissimo* than do the reverse. At such a climax it seems wonderful how a singer with a temperament like Jeritza's can keep control of her forces as she does; for she makes you feel that the vocalist is not being studied in the least—that all physical power is being reserved to meet the demands of the actress.

Altogether, then, her Tosca is an intensely striking and superb performance. Beside this display of sheer genius the Scarpia of Benvenuto Franci was tolerably impressive, but nothing more. He has a fine voice and used it well in isolated passages, but as a rule his declamation was too rough and noisy. Cavaradossi had a competent representative in an American tenor named Aroldo Lindi. The new Milanese conductor, Sergio Failoni, was probably too nervous to do himself justice, but he improved as the opera went on. The warmth of the enthusiasm and the number of recalls must have reminded him of the Scala at its liveliest. HERMAN KLEIN.



## PERSONS AND PERSONALITIES

(continued)

By SYDNEY GREW

### IV. Moszkowski

NO name, I imagine, of the writers of pleasing music will be better known to amateurs than that of Moszkowski, because all amateurs must for certain know some of his works, if only the ever-fresh dances on Spanish themes, now between forty and fifty years old; yet few music-lovers are aware of his character or history, so that his name is but a name, like that of an Elizabethan musician, and not a symbol that at once evokes a definite personality.

Obscurity of this kind is bad. We may believe that only the music of a composer matters for us, and that the closest knowledge of the man himself, the conditions under which he worked, and his general surrounding circumstances, will not make us like his music any the more or dislike it any the less; yet the truth is that we can hardly appreciate music to the full unless we have that knowledge of the musician which, imaginatively exercised, leads to a sympathetic understanding of the man himself.

Unfortunately, however, there does not appear to be much known about this particular composer, at least in England. He stands midway between the genuinely popular and the genuinely "classic," and literary musicians have consequently never been inspired to write of him in the musical periodicals. The dictionaries give him but a dozen lines; and when he died on March 7th of the present year the obituary notices were naturally brief and meagre. I have therefore looked up a few details of his earlier work, as recorded in the English musical papers of some forty years ago, in the hope of removing this prevailing obscurity and of helping forward a livelier understanding of his delightful pieces.

Moritz Moszkowski was a Pole, born on August 23rd, 1854, at Breslau, the capital of

Silesia. He studied music at Dresden and at Berlin. In 1873, when nineteen years of age, he came out as a concert pianist, continuing this travelling existence for nearly a quarter of a century. He rapidly became known as a composer of delightfully spirited music, and no doubt made a good income, more especially as during those twenty-five years he taught regularly in the Kullak Academy of Music at Berlin. It was in 1885 that he became known in England as a writer in the larger forms, when he was honoured by some important performances at the Philharmonic Society's concerts in London. In the year 1897, at the age of forty-three, he settled in Paris, where he died.

Some months before his death the musical world heard with regret and surprise that for a long time he had been living in a state of destitution. His health had broken down, and so he could do no work. Some years ago—no doubt before the war—he had sold all his copyrights and invested the capital in Polish, Russian, and German securities; these became valueless, gradually or quickly, and eventually the old man was absolutely penniless.

During the winter some money was collected and put at his disposal; but it was too late to do him much good, and so by ill-luck, and by that fortune of war we romance about sentimentally when not ourselves enduring it, the man who had literally charmed an entire world for more than a generation passed out in a penury and sickness which a delayed charity could not modify. This is one of the many instances of such endings recorded in the history of art and artists, and it is all the more painful in that it attended a life otherwise highly successful in every sense.

Moszkowski deserved his success. He deserved



the long-continued income from his smaller works—the *Spanish Dances*, Op. 12, the *From Foreign Parts*, Op. 23, the elegies, waltzes, minuets, “album-leaves,” “sketches” and “poems,” the *Album Espagnole*, Op. 21, and the like; because right from the beginning, or at least from the age of twenty-five, he strove to create serious music in the grander manner.

That he more or less failed in this effort does not affect the matter. He encouraged an earnest ambition to be a great master, refusing the easy path of the persistent maker of small things, however happy these might be. Perhaps the last years of his life were brightened a little by the thought of these brave efforts of his; if they were, he could have said with Browning:

“What I aspired to be,

And was not, comforts me.”

As early as 1879 Moszkowski wrote a large “symphonic poem” on the story and character of Joan of Arc—surely a lofty subject for a young man. Those were the days when the influence of Liszt and Berlioz, the founders of this form of music, was making itself felt creatively. Ten years later, in 1889, Richard Strauss, the first true modern master of the tone-poem, produced his first example in his *Don Juan* orchestral piece, being then of exactly the same age as Moszkowski when Moszkowski produced his *Joan of Arc*.

The first movement portrayed Joan’s life in the country, before the call came. One of the middle sections was an attempt to reveal the girl’s spiritual nature, by a reverie called *inner consciousness*. The finale was entitled *Prison: Triumph, Death, Apotheosis*, which rather reminds one of Strauss’s second tone-poem—the *Death and Transfiguration* of 1890. Included in the poetic scheme of *Joan of Arc* is a Processional March: this was published in piano duet arrangement.

*Joan of Arc* was given at a Philharmonic concert on May 20th, 1885. The composer was so well known as a pianist and writer in the smaller forms that this development aroused plenty of interest and warmed the critics to a fair sympathy. I gather, however, that the critics were not specially inclined to favour the tone-poem itself as a musical form; and though they agreed that this particular work was full of melody, original thought, and charming effects, they decided that its best parts were just those where Moszkowski simply forgot his story and wrote plain “abstract” music; which probably means that the critics most enjoyed the passages where they happened to forget to try to apply the detailed “programme” to the work unfolding before them. The audience liked it, and Moszkowski received several re-calls.

The following year, on March 4th, Moszkowski’s *Violin Concerto*, Op. 30 (the tone-poem is Op. 19), was played at a Philharmonic concert by Tivadar Nachez. It was unanimously condemned for a thing

feeble, inordinately long, and empty of interest; though the slow music won a word of moderate approval. Nachez played so well that the performance moved the audience to enthusiasm.

On the following June 2nd was produced a work written specially for the society at the request of the committee. This was the *First Suite for Orchestra*, Op. 39, a work by no means dead-to-day, and destined (as regards its slow movement, at any rate) to live for many years to come. I am well acquainted with the suite, and can repeat its first critics’ praises—that it has the grace and delicacy of Moszkowski’s piano pieces, that it is full of melodic fancy, simple energy, and rhythmic variety, and that in general it is a series of very charming or exhilarating pictures in music.

Moszkowski conducted the first performance of the suite, and was again recalled several times. In February, 1908, he came to London to conduct a programme made up entirely of his own works; among them were the *Piano Concerto*, Op. 59, the above-mentioned violin concerto (which critics now discovered to be a “melodious” composition, not apparently tedious), a new orchestral suite (Op. 79), of which the waltz was most dainty, the ancient *From Foreign Parts*, and a song from the opera of *Boabdil*, which had been produced in Berlin in the year 1892.\*

I read that Moszkowski conducted in a quiet and unobtrusive manner and that he “secured from the Queen’s Hall Orchestra” admirable interpretations of his compositions”; all of which means that he was a quiet and unobtrusive man, whose mind was spontaneously alert and whose every action was characterised by what we call to-day “efficiency.”

It is only by a perfect “efficiency” that a musician can make music that pleases the world, whether the music be a fox-trot, a symphony, an opera, or a little thing of beauty like Moszkowski’s entrancing *Serenata*, Op. 15, No. 1, originally written for piano solo, but in the end played on every solo instrument and on every possible combination of instruments.

\* A selected list of gramophone records of Moszkowski’s music will appear in a later number of THE GRAMOPHONE.

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# These Modern Discontents—and their Remedy

## Mr. Newman's Book on Criticism. A Great Argument

By W. R. ANDERSON

WHAT, amid all the artistic excitements of to-day, do we need most? Surely the scientific mind, that works orderedly, examining evidence, refusing to be stampeded into this or that popular opinion: that sees a problem steadily and sees it whole; above all, that works *historically*. We lose perspective so readily—are apt to imagine that everything under the artistic sun is new; and, being new, is wonderful.

A book that dispassionately reviews the whole question of present-day music and its criticism is therefore greatly welcome. The title of Mr. Ernest Newman's book—"A Music Critic's Holiday" (Cassell, 12s. 6d.)—is soon explained. Mr. Newman figures a critic, distracted with the varying views about modern music, retiring to a country house, in whose library he browses, and finds comfort in his doubts, by comparing the treatment of great composers of the past by their contemporaries with some popular, erroneous legends. The Argument prefixed to the book excellently epitomises its matter. From nearly three hundred pages, every one filled with splendid, virile thought (yet so simply expounded that anyone can understand it—let no one imagine this is a "heavy" book), I extract a few remarks, many of which are the principles upon which we ought always to be thinking about art, but which are so strangely forgotten in these days of confused ratiocination.

"Little or nothing durable comes from the movement of revolt until it is fertilised by some of the more stable forces of the past." "... the vital changes in music come not so much from a general and conscious movement in a direction that is clearly seen, as from the irruption of some original, incalculable and highly dynamic mind." Later (speaking of the fallacy that it is the critic's business to "encourage" mediocrities, in the hope that from many such may spring a genius): "The one vital consideration [is that] the higher circles of art are an aristocracy into which no one can be promoted by the crowd; one has to be born into it or one never gets into it. Over the production of a Bach, a Mozart, a Wagner, a Chopin, we have not the slightest control; he is the one-in-a-million chance of a one-in-a-million father and mother."

"Ah, but what happens when the heaven-sent genius comes along?" has been the cry of some. Is he not scorned—his path made difficult, his new art derided? Was it not so with nearly all great men, from Monteverde to Wagner?

This is the root error, the pernicious and fatuous error, that Mr. Newman takes pains, by the best possible evidence, to show as the miserable, misleading thing it is. The statement is simply not true; and much hangs from its being proved a lie.

Mr. Newman takes a representative critic of the past, J. C. Lobe, and studies his "Letters of a Well-known" (1852). We see how the critical faculty worked in Lobe, and how we can learn from his errors—based, be it noted, on admirable principles. This is only a means of driving home some principles which Lobe overlooked, and which the laudators of so much present-day music refuse to recognise. How senseless has been the gushing praise of contemporaries! If you consider how a scientist would approach any so-called "new" discovery, with what a balanced and detached mind he would apply to it all the tests of experience and history, you see in a moment how silly nine-tenths of the talk about the music of people like Stravinsky and Schönberg has been. Let me quote a few more of Mr. Newman's deeply probing, clarifying remarks—only a few, taken almost at random; for to do justice to his exposition is impossible without quoting scores of pages from the book: every thoughtful person ought to get it, digest it, and apply its principles every day of his life. Pursuing the point about the supposed hostility of people in general (or even of critics in general) to innovators, he says (p. 117): "The most diligent search on my part has failed to discover in the whole of Wagner's letters and prose works a single complaint from him that the public was against him, or even inappreciative of him."

This is a sovereign thought. Let us pursue it. *Why* is the work of the genius immediately widely appreciated? Surely, above all technical reasons, because, coming from the heart, it appeals to the heart of the hearer. The wayfaring man may understand no jot of its cleverness, but it touches him on some side or other—makes him chuckle (as many a man-in-the-street chuckles at Beethoven's jests in the symphonies, without knowing why he is moved to mirth), or moves him emotionally in some broad, deep way. Where is the moving power—the appeal from the heart to the heart—in nine-tenths of the music of to-day? It simply does not exist. By the lack of human feeling, above all else, much of the music of the world we live in stands condemned.

We do not condemn hastily. We have had at



least a dozen years' experience of most modernists, and a score of some. Concerning how many of the extremists are we as hopeful as when we first heard them? Stands Schönberg where he did? How is it with Stravinsky? Surely we note most surely in him the decay of a notable talent wilfully perverted. The young French lions were to bring joy and piquancy into a dismal world. Where are now the gay impudences of the brave "Six," who so boldly ruffled it a few years ago? Gone the way of all work lacking in beauty and depth of earth.

Is there then no virtue, asks someone, in pioneer work, even if it be not obviously of the highest type? Is there no meed of praise for the man who breaks shackles?

The first point is that he who says "shackles" begs the question. Is that bugbear of the modernist, sonata form, the chief "shackle"? Shackle me no shackles. The genius never prates about them. He uses all things for his great ends—infuses into a thing having little life the new blood of his rich imagination, pours out the nobility of his spirit upon thirsty ground. He moulds; perhaps breaks others' moulds, but if he does so, replaces with finer. The youngster of to-day casts the moulds aside; but what does he put in place of them? The yammering monotonies of Russian repetitions of time-patterns that have scarcely any value as rhythm; the pointless meandering of a mind concerned only to be different in its expression from anyone else's. Impatiently throwing aside the diamond whose worth he does not understand or refuses to believe in, the child plays contentedly with his bits of coloured glass, arranging and rearranging them in patterns that charm his easy fancy.

To Mr. Newman's argument again for first principles (page x.): "All talk of 'pioneers' among us of to-day is thoroughly vain, for until the future has revealed itself no one can be sure whether the 'pioneer' has led music into an inhabitable new territory or into a *cul de sac*. Originality of itself counts for little, for there are two kinds of originality—one that matters and one that does not. The opener-out of a new path may prove sterile, while a Bach, who originates nothing, may be a seminal force for all succeeding generations."

On any count, with whatever artistic hope we come to the task of judgment, where do we discern the genius of to-day in music? It is a shattering thought. Put aside the half-dozen men whom we esteem highly, yet dare not speak of as geniuses (remembering the great ones of the past with whom the use of such a word would class them)—put aside these, and where, of the composers of the younger generation—say under fifty—have we a clearly-discerned and universally acknowledged genius?

For what then do we hope? Well, science hopes

much, and believes only upon evidence. The easy way to-day is to let belief found itself upon hope. A shoal, a sandbank of a foundation, that. Some of us are feeling, in these days, when it is urged as a reproach that we do not throw up our hats and shout "a genius" at every new man who comes round the corner out of school, that the words "optimist" and "pessimist" are alike the last refuge of the mentally destitute. Many of us resent the one designation as much as the other. We want to see things as they are, not as fancy or fond hope paints them. Not we, but the people who perpetually get in the way of our clear seeing are justly labelled some "optimist" and some "pessimist." Both alike are obstructors of the light. "The critics of that time," says Mr. Newman (referring to the late Wagnerian epoch), "who saw that these men [the minor composers of the day] would soon be forgotten were no doubt charged with impeding the progress of the art, but they were merely seeing things as they were. It is the task of the critic of to-day to see contemporary personalities in their true relative proportions."

(Page 255): "... The first business of the critic in a time of change is to distinguish between the seminal forces and the impotencies among the innovators; but we, with the lesson of the past before us, must make that distinction."

Amateur or professional, we are all critics to-day—it is a duty laid upon us all by our presence in a world of change, in which false values are constantly flaunted before us; in which it is the easiest thing in the world, all unwittingly, to debauch our minds with futilities—the ephemeral things of popular choice, whether "highbrow" or "low."

I am delighted to see Mr. Newman's quotation of a passage from Birrell's "Men, Women and Books" that I have long cherished. Those essays were among the first that I found helpful, when trying to make up my mind about values in life, and I have often enjoyed this passage: "The principles of taste, the art of criticism, are not acquired amidst the hurly-burly of living authors and the hasty judgment thereon of hasty critics, but by study, careful and reverential, of the immortal dead. In this study the critics are of immense use to us. Dryden, Addison, Gray, Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, Bagehot, Swinburne revealed to us their highest critical powers not while vivisectioning a contemporary, but when expounding the anatomy of departed greatness. Teach me rightly to admire Milton and Keats, and I will find my own criticism of living poets. . . . Train me to become a citizen of the true Republic of Letters, and I shall not be found on my knees before false gods, or trooping with the vulgar to crown with laurel brazen brows."

That is a fine thought, finely shaped by a master



of style. Mr. Newman applies it to music: "Teach me rightly to admire Bach and Mozart, and I will find my own criticism of living composers. Help me to enjoy, however feebly, Palestrina and Purcell, and I will promise not to lose my head over Kistler's *Kunihild* or Puccini's *Manon*. Fire my enthusiasm for Wagner or Brahms, and I shall be able to distinguish between the muses of Darius Milhaud and Erik Satie."

There is much discussion in the volume of some very thoughtful views of Dr. Dyson, set forth in his recent book on modern music (Oxford Press), and of some more dubious points (among many that are excellent) made by Mr. Calvocoressi in his short treatise on criticism, published by the same firm. For the enjoyment of this discussion I must refer readers to Mr. Newman's pages. One cannot quote sufficient of the argument to do justice to all.

On p. 290 a fantastic claim by an admirer of Schönberg, that "he is man decades ahead of our epoch," is refuted. "There is not a single case in musical history," says Mr. Newman, "of a composer being a century ahead of his time; the greatest composers have all been perfectly comprehensible to the average instructed music-lover of their day."

There are still some hopeful (and desperately unscientific) persons who opine that the new music is so *very* new, so much more strange than any that has ever appeared before, so much further in advance of what has gone before than any new music—Monteverde's or Wagner's—ever has been, that we cannot apply any standards to it. Well, that argument (if it be such) Mr. Newman duly answers. But what an anarchy to advance it! Wherever in the world is the like, in any other art or sphere of work whatever, of such an argument?

It is a great point with defenders of the new dissonances that we must criticise these works solely in connection with their aims. It is, of course, a canon of criticism that one must not blame a work, as such, for not achieving this or that, if it clearly did not set out to do this or that. Censure of a comedian because he is not tragic is foolish, admittedly. But one has a right to question whether what a composer sets out to do is worth doing; indeed, as I see it, one's first duty is not to ask "How far has he succeeded in doing what he aimed at?" but "How far is that aim reasonable?"; and, even more important, I think, to-day, "How far is it *possible* to achieve that aim?" Can ears take in anything whatever in music? Is there a limit to our powers of hearing? As regards complexity, surely there must be a limit? What is it? Is it not reached when we are asked to listen to a dozen parts in dissonant counterpoint—the counterpoint, not of line, but of timbre, of the "juxtaposition of sonorities" (to use a blessed word that

appears to have comforted many whole-hogging worshippers of the extremists)?

On his last page Mr. Newman sums up: "The critic's concern is not with principles, theories, speculations, prophecies, but only with the present facts of æsthetic experience; he has to judge new music not by what it professes to be or hopes to be, but by what it is; and for this kind of judgment the essential thing is not forward thought but 'back thought.' Our telescopes are useless for the future: they can only help us by bringing the past nearer to us, and so enabling us to compare the present incomplete medley with others that have completed themselves and lie open in every detail to our inspection. We must work always with the past in our minds if we are to maintain a due perspective of the music around us. The only proportionate view is the long view."

And so Mr. Newman's imaginary critic goes back to his work, comforted in mind and soul, facing the day's discontents, the petty stirs of the time, with the constant watchword that "genuine criticism must always function in the past rather than the present."

Let none, putting down this book, written in such admirable tone and temper, complain that it does not immediately enable us to detect the true from the false coin. Some there be who want a "Bradshaw" to everything—want everything done for them. If we burnish our brains by applying Mr. Newman's masterly arguments, we shall be on the road to making discoveries about eternal values in every art.

No sensible person will be encouraged to judge rashly by reading this volume. He need not seek far for criteria of values. The touchstones of beauty, sincerity, strength, purity, and warm, human expression, are to hand, in the great works of all time. Their gracious power has been manifested in the art-work of every age—in Palestrina as in Mozart, in Bach as in Wagner. Not merely by their likeness to or difference from the works of the masters are the works of to-day to be judged; but amidst all the facial changes, underneath the strange trappings, we are to search diligently for the fundamental, vital qualities that have informed and illumined the loveliest things of all the world.

So Mr. Newman does not present us with a ready-made means of dividing the sheep from the goats. Rather does he show us how to think; and that is the greatest thing anyone can do for us—to help us to think more widely and so more wisely. That is the need of to-day, not only in music, which is but a corner of life, but in the queer, rickety, lovable bundle that makes up the whole life of this age wherein, with many a smile and groan, we work out the salvation for which, but faintly seeing, we largely hope.

W. R. ANDERSON.



# GRAMOPHONE CELEBRITIES

## XI.—Madame Frieda Hempel

By B. D. W.

MADAME FRIEDA HEMPEL was born in Leipsic on June 26th, 1885. She showed signs of musical talent at a very early age, and, whilst she was still in her teens she entered the Stern Conservatoire in Leipsic. She studied singing here under the Professor Nicklass-Kempner. Her studies at the conservatoire lasted three years, and at the end of this period she emerged ready to "try her wings." But she did not come upon a world unprepared to receive her, for a singer possessed of such exceptional talents is too rare to be passed unnoticed; she had gained a considerable local reputation before she left the conservatoire. Before the end of her period of study was arrived at she had had several minor triumphs. She had attracted the attention of Count Huelsen whilst she was singing at a students' concert; the count was so impressed by the singer's wonderful voice and youth and beauty that he offered her a contract with the Royal Opera House in Berlin. Madame Hempel had no false ideas about herself, however, and she very wisely refused the offer. She completed her studies without overdue attention to her "career"; she knew the future depended rather upon the perfection of her studies than upon her "sensational début," and as she had no intention of being one of the many musical "meteors" who flit across the firmament of the concert world she deliberately tried to avoid any ostentation. She possessed what Carlyle would have called genius; an infinite capacity for taking pains in the perfecting of her technique.

Eight months before she made her formal début she sang at Bayreuth as one of the Rhinemaidens; this was in 1906. She made a few tentative appearances in London in 1907 which were entirely uneventful. Soon after this she entered into a contract with the Schwerin Opera House, where she appeared in the 1907 season. The stage of the Schwerin Court Opera was not large, but it proved an excellent school in stage craft to the young singer. The intimate type of theatre has always proved the best school of actors and Madame Hempel rapidly developed exceptional histrionic gifts. It was not long, therefore, before the young actress became the idol of the Schwerin audiences; where else could they have found a coloratura soprano who combined simultaneously three unusual qualities in *prime donne* of opera—youth and beauty, a mature understanding of her music, and a remarkable acting ability?

Her wonderful acting and singing caused a considerable sensation, and her fame spread rapidly, far beyond the confines of Schwerin. It was not long before she took part with great success in the Munich Mozart Festival. Instead of waiting for the rest of her career to unfold itself automatically Madame Hempel continued her studies at every opportunity. She gradually widened her repertoire until it comprised the more important Italian and French operas as well as the lighter operas of the German and Mozartian schools. In Germany a singer of such powers is the object of much greater and more general interest than in our own country, and it was not long before Madame Hempel's fame reached the Royal Court. The result was that she was commanded to sing at a private concert in the Royal Palace at Potsdam. The Kaiser was delighted by the young singer's immaculate rendering of the most difficult cadenzas, and was so impressed that he ordered that the contract with the Schwerin Court Opera be cancelled in favour of a three-year contract with the Royal Opera House, Berlin. So far Madame Hempel's rise to fame had been the reverse of arduous, for she made her first appearance at the Berlin Opera in the 1907-8 season. It is from that time that Madame Frieda Hempel's international career may be said to have commenced.

London had paid little attention to the young singer when she appeared there in 1907, but its apathy was not repeated when she made her first appearance in opera in the Beecham Opera Season of 1913 at Drury Lane. The furore she caused was one of the great features of the season, and she was immediately recognised and hailed as a star of the first magnitude. She appeared as the Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute*, as Oscar the Page in the *Ballo*, and also as the Marschallin in Richard Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*. She created the rôle of the Marschallin at the first performance of Strauss's opera in Berlin, and it has remained one of her best parts. No artist who wishes to attain an "international" reputation can afford to miss London out of her itinerary; Galli-Curci and Jeritza are the only artists who have done so, so far, and of these Galli-Curci was what amounted to a dismal failure at her London concerts. Jeritza, on the other hand, has fulfilled our expectations. Frieda Hempel, then, had her fame and future secured by her tremendous success with Sir Thomas Beecham, and it was not long before the Metropolitan Opera of



New York claimed her services. She appeared there with wonderful results, and she is a great favourite still in both South and North America. The war was a crippling factor in her career, and it was not until 1921 that London had the pleasure of seeing the young soprano again.

Madame Frieda Hempel had recently the honour of being chosen from all the sopranos of the world as the most suitable to impersonate Jenny Lind at the hundredth anniversary of the birth of that great singer. There was a special concert held in honour of the anniversary, and Madame Hempel appeared in a costume of the period. The programme consisted of songs and arias which were the great Jenny's especial favourites. The idea proved such a success that Madame Hempel has since made an appearance *a la* Jenny Lind a feature of her concerts; she devotes half the programme to her impersonation and appears in the second half as "herself." In a singer of less merit a pretension to a resemblance to the Swedish Nightingale would be deplorably bad taste, but in Frieda Hempel's case it is remarkably apt, as the following extract from a letter of Theodor Billroth will show. In this letter he is describing the voice of Jenny Lind, yet the description applies equally well to Madame Frieda Hempel:

"... the personality in Jenny Lind's singing is not describable. ... she sings with the greatest ease from the low A flat (below the treble stave) to the high F (in the leger lines), and every note is as clear and full toned as the next. Her *crescendo* and *diminuendo* are very effective, and at the same time entirely personal ... the faintest *pianissimo* so that you can hardly tell where the sound is coming from, so light that you can barely know if you are hearing anything or not; but you can hear it clearly, and it is not thin nor is it fine-drawn, but always full and round. Her *fortissimo* is never shrieking, never sharp nor shrill, but always powerful and beautiful, and like to make the blood run cold."

All this might apply to Frieda Hempel and justly, particularly where Dr. Billroth continues saying: "Her *coloratura* is of such roundness and beauty that you can have hardly an idea of her *scale* when you hear a great artist play one on the most perfect of instruments ... when she sings ornaments they are so easily executed that it is impossible to believe them difficult. ..."

It would be difficult to describe Madame Hempel's voice fully, since I have already used up so many serviceable adjectives in my description of her career. However, Dr. Billroth has described it very accurately in his description of Jenny Lind. It is not a typical German voice any more than it is a typically national voice. It has a freshness and limpidity all its own and peculiarly welcome, whilst it is in no way lacking in "body." For the gramophone saturated in the tradition of the Italian and

French *coloratura* singing, Frieda Hempel's records will come as a distinct shock. She sings her "fire-works" accurately and with abundant liveliness. Her singing is always beautifully restrained; she never does anything out of keeping with the particular *aria* she is singing or purely for effect. The listener is assailed with a feeling that there is no upward limit to her voice-range. Her rendering of the most difficult *cadenzas* is impeccable, and she does not exhibit that common failing of her type—weak rhythmic sense. Of late years Madame Hempel has shunned the more elaborate *florituri* and has devoted herself more thoroughly to *lieder*. If we had never known her as one of the greatest operatic sopranos of the present century (or for the century previous, for all that!) we should hail her now as one of the ablest exponents of the *Art-Song*. She is still young and at an age at which the majority of the world's celebrities of song have just begun to attain the zenith of their career. We have every reason to hope, therefore, that we shall continue to see a splendid series of her records issued. She has never ceased to study her art and she is by reason of her musical intelligence (quite apart from the beauty of her voice) in the very front rank of the great artistes of the day. It must be admitted that there are lamentably few modern singers who take a real interest in anything but the "box office returns." It may be in their own interest, but true genius consists of altruism.

Madame Hempel's records must be grouped into two distinct classes: The recordings made in recent years and those made in the pre-war days from 1910 to 1914. The majority of the records in the latter class have been included, with most becoming modesty in the Gramophone Company's No. 2 catalogue of "Records of Historical Interest." I consider that most of the records in the No. 2 catalogue have every right but that of *recentness* to be in the general catalogue; they are certainly a far more interesting selection than that which has found its way into the 1925 catalogue. I will therefore deal with these records first. There are no *lieder* included in the excerpts in these *historical records*, but instead we have the *Queen of the Night* arias from *The Magic Flute* and the only soprano record from the *Seraglio* in a British catalogue. Hempel's singing of the *Rache Arie* of the *Queen of the Night* is stupendous, and I prefer it to that of Maria Ivogün on Odeon in spite of the fact that Ivogün has the advantage of much improved recording technique. Technically, all Hempel's records with one exception are excellent both technically and vocally. The exception is the aria from the *Seraglio*, which has a "ghost voice" in the first few grooves.

The records on the historical list are interesting also for their subject-matter, which is decidedly unusual in our accepted methods of repetition and



duplication. If there is any fault about Hempel's singing in these older records it is that she seems too far away and that she has apparently an earnest desire to show how "high she can go" by reaching an F in alt (and in one or two cases a G) in her *cadenzas*. The staccato F's in the *Queen of the Night Aria* are marvellous, and I cannot understand anyone wanting further records of this aria after he has heard this one. The date of recording is placed against each record in the catalogue, but this must not be taken as an indication of the quality, for without exception the records are very fine specimens indeed, both as regards the orchestra and the reproduction of the voice.

The following is a list of the best records in this "Historical section." They are in what I consider to be the approximate order of merit. They are all 12in., double-sided.

1. *Der Hölle rache Kocht in meinem Herzen* (*Queen of the Night Aria*), D.B.365.
2. *Frag' ich mein* (two parts) (*Una voce poco fa*), sung in German, D.B.455.
3. *Bravoura Variations on Mozart's "Ah! vous dirai-je Maman?"*, D.B.352.
4. *Kann mich auch an ein Madel erinnern?* (*Roesnkavalier*), D.B.373.
5. *O moment enchanté!* (*Masaniello*), D.B.276.
6. *Infelice, sconsolata* (*The Magic Flute*), D.B.331.

When we come to the "General Catalogue lists" we find several curious things. There are, for instance, two distinct records of the same aria. There are minor differences in rendering, notably in the *cadenzas*, but even that is not sufficient excuse for such repetition and duplication of early Verdi. I refer, of course to the two *Ernani* arias listed as *Ernani Involami* and *Surta e la Notte*. The one title is the name of the aria whilst the other is derived from the first few words of the recitative. All the operatic records seem contemporary with those on the No. 2 catalogue. But they are in every case really wonderful examples of a flexible and sympathetic voice. It is on this list also that we find the few lapses from grace in the matter of subject-matter. When we have an artist of intelligence it is a matter of utter disgrace that she should be made to sing such poor material as that contained on record D.B.293. Strauss' waltzes, *The Blue Danube* and the *Wine, Women, and Song*, are tolerable as dance music, but they become tedious in their vocal arrangements, and all the *fiorituri* in the world that Madame Hempel might add to them cannot alter the fact. It is a pity also that in "making up" the record D.A.250 the arrangement of Rubinstein's much mangled *Melody in F* should have been chosen as the companion for the delightful *Bird Song* of Soderberg. It has led to the exclusion of the Swedish folk song *When I was seventeen*.

There are one or two regrettable omissions from

our English lists also, including the duets with Amato, *Dite alla giovane* and *Imponente! Non amarlo ditegli*, on record No. D.B.135 of the Italian list and also the duet from *Rigoletto*, *Figlia! Mio padre*, which appeared in the 1923 list as record No. 2-054060. These are the more regrettable by the fact that we have only Galli-Curci and de Luca's renderings to satisfy our longings.

The records of excerpts from Verdi's seldom heard *Ballo in Maschera* are all very good, although Caruso does not please me at all in either the *Quartet* or the *Quintet*. I shudder at what is meant to be light-hearted laughter. Hempel is, however, far from being drowned by his stentorian bellowing, and her voice rises above the din with all its purity emphasised. Her rendering of the aria *Qui la voce* is rather fuller than that of Galli-Curci. Perhaps I should have said the recitative *Qui la Voce* and the aria *Vien diletto in ciel la luna*, for Hempel's version is contained on two records, a ten-inch one holding the recitative and the twelve-inch one the aria proper.

Her *lieder* records are all recent recordings, and one of the best of these is now unfortunately out of the list owing to a defective matrix. (This, however, I have placed on my list, as it may be possible to obtain a copy.) Her best record to date is, I consider, *O, had I Jubal's lyre*. The following is a list of the best records on the general catalogue; the records are roughly in order of merit as reproductions of Madame Hempel's voice. In the newer records her voice has been brought a little more forward (nearer the machine, that is) but she is never blatant or nasal. The only record where she makes a mistake is that of Schubert's *Horch, Horch, die Lerche*, in which she shows a curious misconception of the second phrase, "On chalice flowers that lies."

In short I can confidently recommend any of Madame Hempel's records to even the most confirmed sopranophobe amongst gramophiles. They are without exception beautiful examples of a delicate style and the product of an unusual musical intelligence.

1. *O had I Jubal's lyre!* (*Joshua*, Handel); *Alleluia!* (arr. O'Connor Morris). D.A.676.
2. *Wohin?* Op. 25, No. 2; *Ungeduld*, Op. 25, No. 7 (Schubert). D.A.251.
3. *Widmung* (Schumann); *Wiegenlied* (Mozart). D.A.557.
4. *Surta e la Notte* (*Ernani*, Verdi); *Vien' diletto* (*Puritani*, Bellini). D.B.296.
5. *Robert, toi que j'aime* (*Robert the Devil*, Meyerbeer); *La Villanelle* (E dell'Acqua). D.B.297.
6. *Auf flügeln des Gesanges* (Mendelssohn); *Horch, Horch, die Lerche* (Schubert). D.A.382.

In conclusion I should like to thank the Gramophone Company for their kind assistance in letting me hear those records which are not in my collection.



# ARMCHAIR PHONATICS

By P. WILSON, M.A. (Oxon)

## III.—Record Wear (*continued*)

A "ROMANTIC" sound-box almost invariably makes a worn record seem better than it actually is. I have tested some which make even my "pet shriekers" sound pleasant. Wear usually manifests itself to the ear in sounds of high pitch, and a romantic sound-box responds more readily to vibrations of low pitch, but tends to suppress those of high pitch. That is precisely the cause of its romanticism. The sounds which give character to a voice or a musical instrument are the "harmonics" or "overtones," and some of the most important of these are of relatively high pitch. In an oboe or clarinet, for example, the overtones above the seventh—that is, more than two octaves above the fundamental tone which gives the note its normal pitch—are of the greatest importance. A flute on the other hand has very few overtones. That is why a romantic box tends to turn an oboe into a flute, particularly in the upper register. It is inevitable that a sound-box which will reproduce an oboe properly will reproduce also all the surface noise there is and will react most unfavourably to wear of any kind. Conversely, if it is your object to obtain a reproduction as nearly as possible like the original, it is well to be suspicious of any sound-box which claims to reduce surface noise or to make worn records like new. The legitimate place to reduce surface noise is in the record surface and in the contact between needle and record, and not in the acoustic properties of the sound-box.

To detect wear, then, it is necessary to use a sensitive realist sound-box which reproduces sounds of high pitch at their proper value. This illustrates a difficulty with which one is faced when testing record-wear: the sound-box which detects wear soonest is one which wears records least. Tests of record wear may therefore be very misleading unless the conditions are carefully chosen and fully explained. In the last issue the Editor expressed the opinion that if the track alignment is correct a Petmecky needle will wear records very little. Now I have tried on several occasions to demonstrate that bad alignment is a potent cause of record-wear, and my recent investigations have all fully confirmed that conclusion. I believe, too, that a Petmecky needle, used not more than twice, can, in suitable conditions, be very kind to records. But, however good the alignment, *any* steel needle in a badly adjusted sound-box is capable of doing a lot of damage unless other conditions are complied

with. No doubt Mr. Mackenzie had in mind his "happy combination," and there the statement is certainly defensible since not only are those other conditions satisfied but the sound-box happens to be very well adjusted.

Before I pass on to needles there is one other matter I ought to mention. My attention has been drawn to it by an interesting letter from Mr. E. A. Smith of Great Yarmouth. The danger of allowing grit and dust to remain on records has often been commented upon, and the use of a velvet cleaning pad recommended. So far as I know, no warning has previously been given that too much zeal is equally dangerous. Mr. Smith points out that by excessive polishing it is possible to charge the surface with enough static electricity to pick up more grit and dirt than has been removed. He finds that a heavily polished record, held vertically by the edge, will attract cigarette ash or tissue paper from a distance of three inches. Mr. Smith remarks that the electric charge produced in this way is greatest on Columbia and Parlophone records. This is what one would expect. Rubbing shellac with a suitable material has long been a standard way of producing static electricity, and the surface of Columbia, and to a less extent of Parlophone, records is, I understand, almost pure shellac. A velvet, plush, or silk pad is almost an ideal rubber for the production of electric charges. Mr. Smith suggests that the use of a brush instead of a pad will obviate this difficulty, and that, no doubt, is the case. The most efficient duster that I have found, however, is the material commercially known as "cotton cord" and used for upholstering furniture. It has a good pile, and being made entirely of cotton is not so effective in producing electric charges. Some varieties are treated with size, and it is well to remove this at the start by boiling. A piece of this material fastened by drawing pins to a cork sand-paper block (price 4d.) makes a most efficient record cleaner and has the advantage that the material can be removed and washed frequently. A light grey colour is advisable; this shows dirt quickly. I find that mine picks up enough dust from the records to need washing at least once a month. Whatever material you use, it is well to remember that a light dusting, both before and after playing a record, is much better than heavy polishing.

(*To be continued.*)



# LONDON OFFICE NOTES

## *Worcester and the Ladies*

THE Editor made an error in classing Worcester with other cathedral towns which he charged with neglect of the gramophone, in the June Editorial. Several readers have corrected it, and one of them, a most faithful supporter both of THE GRAMOPHONE and of the N.G.S., is a lady, who has through her sex an additional claim to protest against that Editorial. Another correspondent adds that, at any rate, Worcester is musical enough to make it pay to keep complete stocks of Columbia, H.M.V., and Zonophone records. The charge is withdrawn with great pleasure.

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## *Improvements*

Some of our readers will be glad to hear that we have nearly come to the end of our postal wrappers. Next month and hereafter we hope to get no complaints about lost copies, torn wrappers, or mutilations.

\* \* \*

## *Our Title*

It is well to state explicitly that THE GRAMOPHONE is the only title of this review, which is edited by Compton Mackenzie. It has no connection with any other periodical. Some of our readers—or rather some of the general public—seem to have been puzzled by the new notepaper of one of our contemporaries, which emphasises the *gramophone* rather than the *talking machine* part of its title. We accept the implied compliment, but hope that among the flatterers there are no busy mockers!

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## *An Imperial Opera House*

Mr. Isidore de Lara has promised to come to the Gramophone Congress on the afternoon of the 9th, and to expound his scheme for an Imperial Opera House which has been outlined in these columns during the last few months. Whether he will be able to keep his promise depends upon the dates of rehearsals of his opera in Paris; but it is to be hoped that he will not be prevented from meeting our readers and telling them in his own words why they should become founders. Donations of One Pound may be made at the Gramophone stall at the Congress, or may be forwarded by post to 58, Frith Street, W.1. All donations made through THE GRAMOPHONE are guaranteed both by Mr. de Lara and by THE GRAMOPHONE. If the scheme does not succeed, the money will be returned in full.

## *A new Peridulce Model*

This is merely to register the arrival at the London Office of a new table model of the Peridulce (Messrs. Murdoch Trading Co., Ltd.), designed by Captain H. T. Barnett. It is in its main aspects like the previous models, with a Collaro motor and a back-weight to the tone-arm; excellent finish throughout, a Peridulce sound-box and good needle-track alignment—these go without saying: and Captain Barnett has made up for the smaller amplification by giving his horn one complete “volute spiral” turn. Altogether an attractive model, which will, we hope, be on view at the Congress, and on which an expert report will appear in the next number.

\* \* \*

## *Opera at Home*

Everyone who has operatic records has probably invested in the new edition of “Opera at Home,” which is remarkably cheap at 5s. Those who already have the last edition may like to know that the following operas have been added: *Alceste*, *Così fan Tutte*, *Dido and Æneas*, *L'Enfant Prodigue*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Macbeth*, *Nerone*, *H.M.S. Pinafore*, *Polly*, *Ruddigore*, *Salomé*, *Die Tote Stadt*. On the other hand, six operas are omitted: *L'Amico Fritz*, *Le Caïd*, *The Critic*, *Fra Diavolo*, *Masaniello*, *Orphée aux Enfers*. Although there were, no doubt, good reasons for withdrawing the records, it seems a pity to have reduced the number of operas in the book. The Gramophone Company is much to be congratulated upon an enterprise which is as worthy of its high traditions as the catalogues are. In fact, it would need a Latin scholar to decide whether “Opera at Home” is a *Vade Mecum* or a *Sine Qua Non*. Probably both.

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## *Opera on Columbia*

It is worth noting that the voices of no less than five singers at Covent Garden in the Italian Opera Season may be heard on Columbia records—those of Badini and Franci, the baritones, and of Borgioli, Lappas and Lindi. People are apt to forget that Columbia has a strong and interesting operatic section

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## *The National Gramophonic Society*

Readers are reminded that if they are ever in London and wish to hear the records of the N.G.S. before joining the Society, they will find every facility for doing so at the Broadwood Showrooms, 158, New Bond Street.



## OUR PUBLICITY COMPETITION

**T**HIS competition, started in the March number and closing on August 31st, is having rather a surprising career. THE GRAMOPHONE offered prizes to (i) dealers, (ii) individual readers who helped to secure new readers. Many of our friends in the Trade added substantial gifts to these money prizes. Subscription order forms have been sent in large numbers to competitors; the circulation goes up steadily every month—the June number was sold out—the subscription forms come in to the office—in fact, all seems to be going on well, *but* the subscription forms are not claimed by any introducer! If it were not for the general evidence one might suppose that none of our readers was taking any interest in the competition at all. In fact, if the competition were to be closed on June 30th, the prizes would all be won by firms or individuals who, as far as claims at the London Office are concerned, have not got us even twenty new subscribers.

It is all rather mystifying. But there are two things which must be impressed upon all our readers. Firstly, will everyone please make sure that each new subscriber obtained is credited to the introducer at the London Office? If you have got the order forms from the London Office, write your name in the left hand corner of each *before* sending it to the person whom you hope to make into a subscriber. This is most important, because you may, through no fault of ours, lose these perfectly good prizes from sheer carelessness. Therefore, secondly, it is only fair to our prize-givers that we should state definitely and unequivocally that the first, second and third prizes in both classes will only be awarded to competitors who have got more than twenty new subscribers, *i.e.*, have qualified for the Thirty Shillings' Worth of new records. It is necessary to safeguard ourselves from the possible fiasco of someone filling in a dozen order forms himself and winning a prize worth about £30 by the expenditure of eight guineas!

Our readers—even our staunchest supporters from the very first—probably do not realise, as well as we at headquarters realise, that in every town and every country district and every colony and every foreign country there is quite a large number of people who would be only too grateful to anyone who would introduce THE GRAMOPHONE to them. They are of like passions as ourselves, but they simply have never heard of a paper which will give them independent information about new records and gramophone matters. For this reason the competition is a crusade, a spreading of good news which will be gratefully received, rather than a somewhat embarrassing species of touting; and a large increase in our circulation will benefit everyone, readers and advertisers alike.

The Competition closes on August 31st.

### What you have to do

Write to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1, for some Subscription Order Forms—twenty, fifty, a hundred—as many as you think you can profitably use.

When you get them write your name—or, if you are a dealer, stamp the name of your firm—in the left-hand corner of each, after the words "Introduced by . . ." Then distribute them. Give them to people, post them to friends, post them to strangers. Persuade, cajole or bully them till they fill in the form and pay a year's subscription.

The Order Form, when filled in, should either be sent to THE GRAMOPHONE or else given to the nearest newsagent or dealer (who should be asked to forward it to 58, Frith Street, for identification); but be sure that your name is in the left-hand corner if you want credit for the recruit.

The prizes are divided into two groups:—

#### I. FOR DEALERS

**1st Prize, TWENTY-FIVE POUNDS, and the Editor's original copy of the Fourth Movement of the Schumann Pianoforte Quintet** (see June, p. 2).

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**2nd Prize, SEVEN POUNDS**

**3rd Prize, THREE POUNDS**

[NOTE.—Subscription Order Forms completed must be forwarded to 58, Frith Street, W. 1, to be checked and returned.]

#### II. FOR INDIVIDUAL READERS

##### First Prize:

- (a) **TEN POUNDS.**
- (b) An E.M.G. portable gramophone, given by Mr. E. M. Ginn.
- (c) A "Sesame" cabinet, model O, given by Messrs. Boumphrey, Arundel and Co.
- (d) An "Astra" No. 4 sound-box or other "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of Two Guineas, given by the Gramophone Exchange.
- (e) Beethoven's *Choral Symphony* in an album, given by the Gramophone Co., Ltd.
- (f) Twelve "Polydor" records of winner's own choice, given by Messrs. Alfred Imhof.
- (g) The Editor's Prize—the Third Movement of the Schumann *Pianoforte Quintet* (see June, p. 2).

##### Second Prize:

- (a) **THREE POUNDS.**
- (b) An "Astra" No. 2 sound-box or other "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of One Guinea, given by the Gramophone Exchange.
- (c) Bound volume of miniature scores of Beethoven's string quartets, given by Messrs. Goodwin and Tabb (1924), Ltd.

##### Third Prize:

- (a) **TWO POUNDS.**
- (b) "Astra" proprietary goods to the retail value of Half a Guinea, given by the Gramophone Exchange.

To every reader who gets TWENTY new subscribers—  
**THIRTY SHILLINGS' WORTH OF RECORDS**  
(reader's choice).

To every reader who gets TEN new subscribers—

A copy of "GRAMOPHONE NIGHTS," with the Editor's autograph.  
The Editor's decision in all cases will be final.



## JULY COMPETITION

On p. 81 will be found some correspondence between the Editor of *John o' London's Weekly* and the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE. The latter writes, "A prize of £5 will be offered for the best list of twenty-five records which are generally admitted to be good music, but which at the same time have been tested on the 'man in the street' and found successful." These being the terms of reference, competitors are advised to study the correspondence from which they are extracted, so as to help us to compile a list of records which may be thoroughly recommended to all the gramophone beginners for whom Mr. George Blake writes. The list will be decided by popular vote, and the Editor's ruling in any difficulty will be final.

Rules to be observed:—

- (i) Make a list of the twenty-five records (not twenty-five *works*), giving make, catalogue number, size, price and title, and writing only on one side of the paper.
- (ii) Write your name and address on it, *not* on a separate slip.
- (iii) Post it to reach THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1, not later than Monday, July 27th.



# A "FAN" OF FOUR

By H. R. BARBOR

THE gramophone must assuredly be regarded as the greatest cultural heritage for the direct instruction of youth, conferred by the last generation upon this and future generations. And while, curiously enough, this great aid to instruction remains comparatively unused by academic authorities, I suspect that the influence of recorded music on youthful intelligence nowadays is having an incalculable effect. Music, the most international—as it is the most comprehensive—of the arts may now be said, thanks to the advances which have been made on Edison's original discovery, to be open to the world's democracy, whereas formerly it was a privileged inheritance of the few. Although radio shares with the gramophone the contemporary popularising of music as a whole, from the educational point of view the gramophone as a means of extending and deepening musical appreciation is unrivalled, inasmuch as the possession of records permits the owner to enjoy or to study any individual composition or composer at will. The reactions to the gramophone of a certain young man of my intimate acquaintance, observed over a period of some years, have astonished me, and of this astonishment has been born a recognition of the enormous value of the gramophone as an instrument of education, even of civilisation. I venture here to put on record a few details of these reactions as exemplary of the potentialities of the gramophone in this regard, and as witness for the defence of the necessity of the gramophone as an integral part of the educational equipment not only of adolescence but of extreme youth.

The "fan" of the title, who is now but four years and a few months old, is an accomplished gramophonist, and handles a hundred or so records comprising many of the masterpieces of the world's music with a familiarity with which is blended no contempt, if a certain amount of very definite criticism. From cradle days the big oak cabinet has been his favourite toy-box. It had charms to soothe his savage breast in the earliest days when even a comforting nurse's arms still left him muling. Before he could crawl, his little body made clumsy rhythmic responses to works of more definite beat, and in view of his subsequent distinctly high-brow tendencies, I chronicle almost with apology that his first verbal experiment was to denote his request for the syncopated delights of *Coal Black Mammy* by a reiterated demand: "Tum-tum . . . tum-tum . . . tum-tum . . .", which later developed into the more expressive "Tum-tum-tum." His next favourite was, as I remember, a Polovtsi dance from *Prince Igor*.

The brisker movements of the *Scheherazade* suite, *Carmen*, the *Ride of the Valkyries* and *The Magic Fire* music from *The Ring* quickly succeeded as prime enthusiasm, while among vocal works, Chaliapin's rendering of the *Song of Galitski* from *Prince Igor* and *In the town of Kazan* from *Boris Godounov* seemed for obvious reasons of strong rhythmic stress to make the deepest impression on the budding consciousness.

Chaliapin has indeed remained the best beloved among the singers, and upon him has been bestowed the not unsuitable appellation of "The Man." His admirer has picked up a number of the folk-songs and operatic items from the gramophone repertoire of the great Russian basso, and frequently accompanies "where he burns the towns" (the child's alternative title for Varlaam's song) or "the writing" (his description of the monologue of the old chronicler-monk, Pimen, from *Boris*), or "Eiuchnem" (*The Volga Boatmen's Song*), or "Peterskoi" (the Russian street song), with a not inaccurate vocal effort and a not unamusing attempt at reproducing the Slavonic words. These accompaniments, however, are a much later development.

It was interesting to notice that the *presto's* and *scherzo's* early monopoly of the child's attention was not seriously menaced until his third year, but so soon as the quieter and slower movements of symphony or tone-poem had established their hold on his imagination, he rapidly increased his gallery of favourites by the inclusion of several *largo*, *romanza* and *adagio* passages. With this more cultured placing of the sensational *tempo* elements of music in regard to the art as a whole was observable a concomitant modification of his liking for strong musical colour. Whereas previously the more noisy and full-throated works had made their chief claim, he began now to take a rapidly increasing interest in what one may call the half-tones of the orchestra. About this time, too, he showed his first definite liking, as apart from mere toleration, of chamber-music, and several string quartets came into growing request.

On the whole, however, operatic music undoubtedly holds dominant sway in his musical appreciation. Of all the opera composers of his gramophone acquaintance, Wagner easily takes pride of place. Probably this preference for musico-dramatic compositions is to be sought in the fact that in the normal development of childhood's mentality, imagination attached itself to the narrative content as well as to the pure sound content. In any case, it is a tribute to the cultural value of



the gramophone, surely, that a three-year-old child should not only be thoroughly familiar with the story, for example, of *The Ring of the Nibelungs* (so familiar that his self-invented games should include the characters and theatrical "properties" of these magnificent dramas), but that he should also recognise the outstanding leit-motifs in the musical structure of those many sections of the work which have been recorded, and many of which he has learned by heart out of sheer love. For it must be stressed that in founding this musical appreciation, already developed to an extent of which many an adult concert-goer need not be ashamed, the boy has had no compulsion brought to bear upon him; indeed, not even instigation. He has simply developed this enthusiasm through being permitted the free handling of gramophone and records since he was old enough to avail himself of them without undue risk of catastrophe, before which he was, of course, assisted in the manipulation although allowed free choice of the records which he cared to hear.

His passion for Wagnerian music-drama is almost entirely self-inflamed, although parental explanations of the items to which he formed his earliest attachment may have added fuel to this fire. By the time he reached his fourth birthday he had taken the whole of the Nibelung mythology easily in his stride. Siegfried, Alberich, the Rhine-daughters, Donner, Mime, Brünnhilde, Wotan, and the rest, had become the intimate companions of imagined games. His contemporaries seem often to be somewhat at a loss when he explains, holding a broom-stick across the garden path: "You can't possibly pass this; it's Wotan's spear, and you aren't Siegfried, you're Alberich," and I think a workman who recently entered noiselessly into a room where he was playing and was informed: "I didn't know you were here. Had you got Tarnhelm on when you came in?" was similarly mystified. Natural enough, too, seems the attitude of the hairdresser, who, having lingered too long over the tiresome business of haircutting, was threatened by his small customer with: "You'll get Siegfried's Tod if you don't hurry up," and not being himself a Wagnerian could only reply: "You talk double-Dutch."

Apart, however, from these more obvious manifestations of a childish application of the dramatic aspects of opera, I have been surprised to observe how the deeper æsthetic quality of the music itself has impressed itself on his mind. I think the great musician would have been highly gratified with one tribute paid to his mastery by this youngster. Coming down to breakfast one morning he espied a batch of new records, and nothing would please but that "the new Wagner" should be played while he awaited his meal. The "new Wagner" in question was the admirable rendering of Siegfried's *Funeral March* from *Götterdämmerung*. As the sharp melancholy rattle of the drums was succeeded time

and again by the poignant wail of the death-theme, and those glorious and tragically-stirring themes of heroic impotence before calamity developed, the light of expectation died out of his face, and a puzzled look gave way to grief. His eyes wandered from father to mother, his mouth began to work: "Mum?" he said questioningly, then "Dad?" It was evident that he felt the tragic import of the work and felt too the need of some reassurance which the presence of neither father nor mother wholly gave, so that he broke down and sobbed: "Want Winnie" (his nurse), and finally, "Take it off." Afterwards this fine record became one of his favourites, and ideas of death and funeral were first expounded to him as a result of his interest in this most moving march. The eloquence and the precise æsthetic significance of Wagner's heroic tragic writing was again illustrated when for the first time he heard the concluding record of *The Ring* which describes Brünnhilde's final sacrifice of herself in Siegfried's funeral pyre, when he again begged that the record should be taken off. "I don't want it; stop it. It makes me feel old. It makes me grow bristles," he explained tearfully, "bristles" being those hirsute adornments which he has been credibly informed will obsess the male chin in that vague and distant period "when I'm a big man."

Loge, the fire-god, whose satiric narration is frequently in request by this imperfect Wagnerite, has indeed become a familiar household god. "Would you like a piece of Loge for your cigar-rette?" he asked a visitor who sat with an unlighted cigarette between his lips, and the fireplace is frequently referred to as "that Loge." The bull-mastiff who, dodging kennel and chain, seeks refuge under a settle is told: "You musn't stay in that Neidhohl, you Fafner."

Now that the child has attained complete manipulative skill, it is not uncommon for him to accompany his play with music, and frequently Green-Engine, the only serious rival of the gramophone in his youthful affections, is apostrophised in some such strain as: "There you are, Green-Engine. That's Siegfried's horn-call—you can go off to your siding now," or, "You better be careful, Green-Engine; those Nibelungs are 'pingling' on the anvil, making a big sword to cut off your buffers" (a reference this to the bell-like anvil-motive heard in one of the *Rhinegold* records).

Thus is an infantile world peopled with strange companions of the great myths and legends. Ivan the Terrible, Otello, Tristan, the Tsarevitch (*vice* Dmitri Smirnoff), the Toreador, Salome, Walther, Grane, the dance-girl from *The Snow Maiden*, Osmino, these and many others inhabit distinctive niches of his childish Pantheon, whence they emerge at whiles, sometimes in the strangest of disguises, be it admitted, to share the simple traffic of his life.



Next to Wagner the runners-up for his favour are Stravinsky and Richard Strauss. Among the many works of the latter *Salome* comes first, although the rich humours of *Till Eulenspiegel* challenge this empery. But whereas Wagner is regarded with a certain awe mixed in the familiarity, Strauss, perhaps on account of the prankish Till, comes in for a quasi-irreverent estimation. Thus he is usually referred to as "Mr. Strauss-Mouse." On hearing for the first time a record from *Salome*, he demanded that this should be followed by one of the *Rosenkavalier* group, and then asked: "Did Mr. Strauss-Mouse make both those records?" When informed that he did, and asked why he thought so, he explained: "That *Salome* record made the same noise as that *Rosenkavalier*." Deeds of blood or drollery are, of course, greeted with equally unconcerned interest, and thus the tragedy of the wayward daughter of Herodias is as cheerfully received as the threatened hanging in the *Seraglio*. John the Baptist, indeed, familiarly known as "that John," seems, possibly on account of his persistent emergence from the cistern, to be associated in this youthful mind with his namesake, Jack—in the box! And this same juvenile disregard of high-brow esteem is tallied in the incident of his being caught rhythmically waving a greasy oven-cloth as an accompaniment to the recorded description of Isolde's signalling to Tristan with her scarf.

M. Diaghileff would, I am sure, have varied his recent London programme of ballets had he been aware of the deep disgust occasioned to one potential member of his public when the latter heard that *Pétrouchka* was not to be given. For the series of records have proved a continual source of varied delight, both as a basis of bed-time stories and as an accompaniment to the most extraordinary terpsichorean feats. The most unconsciously humorous comment ever made by the youngster was occasioned by a playing through of this suite. The music, it will be remembered, describes the conflict between the insensitive, thick-headed Moor and the sensitive artist-mind *Pétrouchka*, and the scene on the fair-ground, where the tragedy of these two dolls is enacted, closes with a melancholy midnight snowfall which drives the tired revellers to their homes. The child's mother, speculating on what was in store for him, remarked half to herself as the last record ended: "I wonder what you'll grow up into—a Moor or a *Pétrouchka*." A quiet voice responded from the floor: "I'm aren't going to be neither. I'm going to be one of those peoples what goes home out of the snow"—a will-to-mediocrity more honoured in the observance than in the breach!

These examples, every one of which is a literal statement of a definite happening and which could be multiplied beyond the value of instance, will perhaps serve to show how child mentality can be

stimulated and enriched by the world's inheritance of great music, with no more effort to the child or his guardians than playing with a box of bricks! Musical appreciation, which has, of course, nothing to do with the senseless drumming of exercises and "pieces" on the black and white keys of a piano, is thus seen to be attainable, not as an arduous schoolroom task of mnemonics, but as a joyous pastime of unruffled leisure. Frankly, the writer pleads guilty to involuntary conversion to this belief, and perhaps the former disbelief in this easy acquisition of musical culture was occasioned by that very Victorian musical training which served for years of his own youth to make him look upon all things musical as the invention of some particularly punitive demon. But having watched a child's mind gradually absorb and orientate itself to elaborate and highly-technicalised masterworks of the musician's art, compare these one with another and make jejune but expressive criticisms of their varying structure and contents, the writer unhesitatingly apportions to the gramophone a principal function in the refining and expanding of juvenile intelligence. When a child, left to his own devices and a library of records ranging from Hawaiian hulas to the Bach *Chaconne*, unhesitatingly plumps for the latter, and at the age of four years has developed a taste for Beethoven's symphonies, and knows exactly which movement of which symphony he wants at a particular time, our case is clear.

"Shall I put on that jolly one of that fifth symperny?" he asks a lazy elder stretched in his chair, and the elder, realising that this is the particular description bestowed upon the *Allegro* Third Movement, watches the child select the desired record by some mysterious process of observation and memory from its particular sheath in its particular book, wind the gramophone, change the needle, and bring the wonder of the master's imagination to the fireside.

It's well to have someone to turn the handle!

H. R. BARBOR.

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### *With a Lively Sense*

It would be ungracious if we were not to record the courtesy with which THE GRAMOPHONE is accorded the privileges of press tickets for operas, musical comedies and concerts, and our thanks are especially due to the Direction of the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, to Messrs. Lionel Powell and Holt, to Messrs. Ibbs and Tillet, and to the management of the Wigmore Hall for recognising our claims to consideration. In the nature of things it is impossible to find room for notices of all the musical treats which our critics enjoy; but by having the *entrée* to concerts, etc., we are able to keep ourselves *au fait* with the various activities of artists familiar to the gramophone world.



# THE FORUM

The following articles are unsolicited contributions from readers, dealing with this or that aspect of the gramophone to which each has given thought. A selection from the MSS. received is published every month, and prizes are offered every quarter. Articles should not exceed 1,500 words, and should be typewritten or written very legibly on one side only of the paper. They should be sent to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1., marked "The Forum": and a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed.

This month completes the first quarter since The Forum was started, and our readers are now asked to record their votes by stating on a postcard the three articles in The Forum of the May, June and July numbers of The Gramophone, which they consider worthy of rewards, in the order of preference. Postcards should be marked "Forum" and should be sent to the above address, to reach the office before July 12th.

The first prize will be Five Pounds, the second Three Pounds, the third Two Pounds. Records of the value of One Pound will be sent to the reader who gets the winning list; or, if many readers coincide in their preferences, the Editor's discretion in rewarding them must be accepted.



## ON MUSICAL APPRECIATION

By SCRUTATOR

MUSICAL appreciation is the latest craze. Just after the war we had two severe epidemics, one of the 'flu, and another of "mass production." Every commercial traveller, selling dolls' eyes or spots for rocking horses, was quite emphatic that the only reason they were so cheap, only four times pre-war price, was because his firm did it by "mass production." The disease came from America, carried no doubt like cholera in the holds of ships amongst the rats. However, thanks to the trade unions counter-attacking vigorously, in mass formation, preceded by a "gas" attack, we hear no more of "mass production."

Instead we have "musical appreciation." I'm not quite clear what "musical appreciation" is. That is why I'm writing this article; for one can only be dogmatic on what one doesn't understand. Some day, when the editor of THE GRAMOPHONE has an island to spare, I'm going to retire into seclusion, cogitate awhile, and write a trilogy of books on the subject. So far I've only got the titles, kindly suggested (though not intentionally) by the editor. They are—"F(altar)ing Steps," "The 'Preciator's Progress," and "The Top of the Ladder."

One of the nicest features of musical appreciation has come along too late in life to be of use to me. It seems that nowadays you don't let your children learn to play the piano, and inflict themselves on a lot of excellent people who don't deserve it, but rather you buy a gramophone, and let them listen to good music till they appreciate it. I wish my old dad had been brought up that way; he would have saved me (and a lot of other innocent people who had to listen to my musical attainments—or lack of them) an awful lot of unnecessary suffering.

Musical appreciation, like the measles, gets a good hold of you before you are aware of it and have time to adopt preventive measures. The first symptom is a loss of taste and appetite, and *Yes! We have no bananas* ceases to attract your musical palate; instead you find your enjoyment in more solid stuff, such as *On with the molley*, and *The Barcarolle* from *Tales of Hoffmann*, and such like and so forth. The funny man with the black face and Year One jokes no longer holds you in his thrall; instead you find your delight in *She alone charmeth my sadness* and *Softly awakes my heart*, while such classics as *Poet and Peasant*, *Zampa*, and *William Tell* hold you spell-bound and you really think that at last you are amongst the intellectuals.

About this period the rash begins to break out and you start to take THE GRAMOPHONE. You suddenly and violently discover that, like the man who fell out of the balloon, you are not in it at all! All the old shibboleths are broken down (I'm not quite sure if shibboleths can be "broken down," but anyhow something fairly drastic happens to them!). Ballads, in which your sentimental soul was wont to rejoice, you discover to be as bad as chewing tobacco or betel-nuts or some other outlandish and indigestible commodity, and whenever in future you want a ballad you have to have it on the sly, when no one is watching. You further learn that to indulge in "sfumatura" is as bad as smoking, and your musical withers are wrung to the core (if withers have a core). By this time you have all the more evident symptoms of the disease, your musical temperature being up to 212° Fahrenheit (which, for the benefit of the uninitiated, is boiling point); you start to buy books about it (musical appreciation, I mean, not your temperature), and you find that you have only just started.

After reading ponderous tomes on the subject, you discover that, like the man in "Three Men in a Boat," you have all the complaints enumerated except housemaid's knee, and you commence buying records of the music of Handel, Beethoven, Bach, etc., and despite your sneaking contempt for yourself for wasting money on such stuff, you can't get over the fact that there is something really wonderful in their music, and that to your great astonishment you enjoy it.

This experience is similar to looking at Turner's paintings. Starting by regarding them as absolute daubs, you begin to understand gradually what he saw—his vision of sunlight and atmosphere—the "impression" he had at the time and which he translated to canvas, until you in turn get a proper impression (beg pardon, "appreciation"). Hereabouts another landmark gets blown down; you discover that it is not absolutely essential that songs be sung in English to be enjoyed, but as you usually can't tell a word our English singers sing (without the programme), you might as well get to know what the words mean and have them properly sung in Italian, or French, or Hawaiian, or Timbuctooian. A later development of this symptom is that you despise all songs in English, and so far as music is concerned you are now a hot-stuff "Little Englander," the friend of every country but your own; from being a profound Conservative, you are now a Radical.



About this period of the disease, having warmly embraced all nations (except your own) to your musical bosom, a disquieting symptom appears, your temperature pushes the mercury through the top of the tube—

You begin to like Wagner!!! Whether this liking is real or only an affectation I'm not quite sure, but you feel a little ashamed on making the confession for the first time. Whether it is merely an indication that you have reached second childhood and love an unholy row, or that the awfully prolonged descriptions in the programme (apparently a necessary adjunct to Wagnerian music) appeal to you, I don't know; but there it is! Starting perhaps with nothing

worse than the *Prelude to Act III. of Lohengrin*, there does not appear to be any height (or depth, according to the point of view) to which you may not attain.

Where does the disease stop? What of Scriabine, Scarlatti, Moussorgsky, Przemysl (I'm sorry, that's the town in Galicia which changed hands so often during the war), Debussy, Machynlleth, Tignabruich, and all the rest of the comic people? When the malady has finally run its course, where shall we find ourselves?

Probably on a desert island in the lone Pacific (or the English Channel) writing trilogies on "Musical Appreciation."



## SYMPHONIC SYNCOPATION

By ARTHUR W. GAYTON

IN his article in the May issue Mr. Robert L. Bigg ascribed the invention of syncopation—the successor to jazz—to Art Hickman. This may be so, but my own recollection of the "New York-London Five" records is that they differed but little from those of the Dixieland Jazz Band. They were, perhaps, more restrained, but consisted chiefly of trombone *glissandi*, saxophone howls and giggles, primitive trap-drum "stunts" and an entire absence of melody. In other words, each player seemed to do more or less as he liked, in the regulation jazz manner.

No, I think that the credit for the introduction of the melodious, rhythmic, and symphonic elements into dance music must be given jointly to Paul Specht and Paul Whiteman, and particularly the latter, who, even at the time of *Whispering* and *The Japanese Sandman* (H.M.V., B.1160), was far in advance of any of his contemporaries.

To-day he is, in my opinion, still in a class by himself, and is easily the most significant force in the development of symphonic syncopated music. Take almost any of his records issued during the past twelve months, and listen to them critically. Notice the smooth, easy rhythm, the unobtrusive percussion, which is, nevertheless, there, the novel combinations of instruments, and the organ-tones of the harmonic chords, which do succeed in conveying something of the majesty of a great symphony orchestra. Above all, observe the unique and musicianly qualities of his arrangements. There is one trick alone of his which I have never heard done by any other orchestra in the world, and it seems to be quite simply achieved. It occurs in, amongst other records, *Spain* (B.1847), a striking example of his work. He gets a terrific *crescendo* with, apparently, the full orchestra, followed by a *diminuendo* on the saxophones alone. The effect produced is akin to that of a huge wave breaking angrily on the shore, and, its force spent, peacefully receding.

There are a few American orchestras almost as good as his—The Benson of Chicago, Waring's Pennsylvanians, and those of Paul Specht and Vincent Lopez might be mentioned amongst those whose recordings are available here—but with the exception of Jack Hylton's, which has developed wonderfully, and now has something of "the Whiteman touch," I do not consider that there is any English organisation "in the same street."

The much-vaunted Savoy Orpheans, for instance, seem to me vastly over-rated, and their performances, in comparison with those of leading American bands, like unto those of the Boy Scouts whom they travesty in their *Fantasia* (B.1994)—I cannot imagine why the Gramophone Co. should issue such rubbish as this, and yet withhold from us the four Victor Herbert serenades by the Whiteman Concert Orchestra in the Victor catalogue, which might conceivably be interesting. These "variations" on popular airs have not even the merit of novelty. Paul Specht was doing the same thing three

years ago, and Jack Hylton has been giving them on the "halls" for twelve months past. The latter's treatments of the *Water-melon* song in the manner of various masters were really clever and had some musical merit. As the Orpheans are reputed to be individual executants of the highest order, possibly it is the direction which is at fault. Certainly their ensemble leaves much to be desired.

I cannot imagine that anyone who heard their Queen's Hall concerts was favourably impressed with the nature and possibilities of "symphonic syncopation"—as demonstrated by them—for the programmes were taken up largely with exercises in comic virtuosity and intensely musical compositions like *Eccentric* and *It ain't gonna rain no mo'*. At the last concert a comedian and a male voice quartet were, I believe, even called in, though what connection these might have with "symphonic syncopation" I cannot quite see.

The Orpheans play waltzes very nicely, e.g., *All Alone* (B.1915) and *Haunting Melody* (B.1954), but their fox-trot arrangements are almost uniformly poor and undistinguished. You always know exactly how they will treat a tune; you never get, as with Whiteman, the "gloriously unexpected." Instead, you find the same old alternations of saxophone solos with whole choruses sawed through on muted trumpets. The trumpets in this band always sound to me particularly raucous, yet these instruments can be made to give a pleasant tone—listen to Whiteman's, Hylton's or the one in Art Hickman's *Mandalay* (B.1890), used in conjunction with the strings—and are necessary to give contrast to the mellowness of the saxophones. Some bands have cut them out, but I suspect that the resulting wind tone is inclined to monotony.

Mr. Bigg's conception of the ideal dance band is not altogether feasible. 'Cellos are useless except in waltzes, for which most bands now use them, together with string basses. In the hustle of the fox-trot the 'cello work can be done more easily and efficiently by the baritone saxophone, which gives a very similar tone. Oboi and clarinets are in general use, usually being played by the saxophonists, when necessary. Two trombones against three saxophones would hardly make for balance, and Mr. Bigg omits altogether the sousaphone or tuba, which is essential, giving a rich bass ground-tone to the band, pointing the rhythm, and producing that sensuous throbbing effect which is so fascinating.

The following is my notion of the ideal band: four saxophones, two trumpets, one trombone, four violins, two pianos, sousaphone, banjo and drums. Saxophonists can "double" on oboi and clarinets, and one of the trumpeters on a cornet, if desired. For waltzes, especially, the additional violins, with the 'cello and string bass, would give quite a good



string tone (Jos. C. Smith has, I believe, as many as five or six violins in his dance orchestra). Two pianos are always to be preferred, and can sound very attractive in expert hands. (There is a nice saxophone solo with two piano accompaniment in *June Night*—B.1894.) The banjo should

be either muted or placed well at the back, so that its penetrating metallic quality is not too noticeable in what would, I think, be otherwise an effective and well-balanced combination. [*The Suite of Serenades* referred to has now been issued—C.1196].



## PLAYING WITH THE GRAMOPHONE

By A. L. LUETCHFORD

HOW many instrumentalists are there who have played with the gramophone? The writer is an amateur 'cellist who has found through experience that the very utmost pleasure may be obtained in this direction. In these days when the recording companies are issuing symphonies, string quartettes, operas, etc., and firms like Messrs. Goodwin and Tabb are issuing countless miniature scores, the way is easy to form a good library for use in this particular way.

I have found the deep resonant tone of the 'cello much more responsive and sympathetic towards the gramophone tone than, say, a violin, and most of my success has been with H.M.V. and Vocalion records. Their "pitch" (I am speaking now of modern records) is always the same, and there need be no fear of constant "tuning" of the 'cello or other stringed instrument. On the other hand, I have recently sampled the Haydn *Surprise Symphony* issued by Parlophone and found on reaching the last movement that the "pitch" of this record is entirely different to the previous ones. This is a most important point which all players of stringed instruments will at once realise.

With regard to the needles which should be used, from the point of view of speed in changing records and continuing

from one to another, undoubtedly fibres used with the H.M.V. automatic cutter are the most desirable. The needle can be resharpened automatically and instantaneously, the record changed and the symphony, etc., continued. The needle should be placed on the outside of the record rim and pushed forward with the hairs of the player's bow when he or she is seated ready to commence. Both machine and player will be then prepared to commence together.

In recent criticisms it has been stated that the bass of the 'cello, etc., is very poorly recorded. Naturally, this is of little consequence under these circumstances, and to any who feel disposed to experiment in this way I would recommend them to try the intermezzo record from the Cortot-Schumann *Pianoforte Concerto*, continuing with, say, Beethoven's *No. 5 Symphony*, a standard overture or a Haydn string quartette.

The results will, I think, be surprising to the player, and I am sure many who, like myself, have at some time or another been members of some anæmic amateur orchestral society will never want to have anything to do with such concerns after playing with all the best orchestras, quartettes, etc., as given to us on the gramophone.



## THE TWILIGHT OF A MAESTRO

By WILLIAM DIXON & ANOTHER

IF you would listen to the song of a man who grieves, play Ignace Jan Paderewski's record of Schubert's *Impromptu in B flat major*. Here are no pianistic fireworks—no ineffectual attempts to make lyrical the vulgar rhapsodising of Liszt. Paderewski soothes the fevered Schubert and the result is—poetry.

"Merely an air with five variations and a coda," we remark airily to the heathen who have not read THE GRAMOPHONE review. The sceptics sit down and, preparing to have their artistic sensibilities lacerated by surface noise, eagerly search within for enthusiastic words of appreciation to use when the last chord blasts its way into freedom.

We turn over to Part II. amid an impressive silence. Our own opinion of the reproduction is registered on surprised faces: surface noise practically nil, tone—perfect!

But when the record is finished we hear criticisms that startle us. "How very light and pleasing!" "Sweetly pretty!" our guests exclaim. Pleasing? Pretty? Surely this is one of the most pathetic records that ever has been made! My collaborator and I thought we had at last taught ourselves to beware of the dazzling effect of red and gold labels on young critics. Murmuring about the honour of prophets we again listen to the record, this time with our backs to the label. However, we still fail to capture the brilliant lightness that entranced our converts.

Consider the noble courage of a man who rebuilds the ruined fabric of his life work at an age when most people retire into the background. It would be physically impossible for some men of sixty-six to return to five-finger exercises and

to the drudgery of hours of practice, yet Paderewski has done this. One would expect those terrible years of preparation in Switzerland to smother the fading light of genius, but Paderewski is still Paderewski.

What message has he brought back to his three audiences—concert hall, gramophone, and wireless? Two men, one a music-teacher, went to a Paderewski concert. Afterwards, the music-teacher was asked for his opinion of it. He said: "Very interesting to note the dramatic use he made of pauses." The other man said: "By Jove, he has lost most of that romantic-looking hair—he's quite bald in front!"

We think that most musicians will agree that loud-speaker reproduction of pianos is more than a failure. We "listened-in" that Sunday night to Paderewski's broadcast (hideous term!) through a friend's set. The recital was a fiasco. Our friend generously admitted that the gramophone reproduction of the second *Hungarian Rhapsody* was superior to the Savoy Hill version.

When the maestro sat down in the recording room perhaps he realised that he was about to carve his own memorial for posterity. At the beginning of this *Impromptu* one can almost hear the gates of Eternity swing slightly on their hinges; when the end is reached one feels that Paderewski has turned towards the shadows to meet Schubert with the same hope which has borne him through life.

Although the crude musical reproductions of to-day will be despised by our children we shall still play this record because here is the song of one who loved his fellow-men.



# CHAT

## By "INDICATOR"

I HAVE been thinking along a line in which many of us can help. It is by each noting data for "Barometric and Hygrometric Acoustics." Sounds stiff, doesn't it? But really, it is easy, and will be very helpful. All you have to do is to jot down on an evening's date the reading of the barometer, either your own or from next morning's *Daily Mail*, together with the hygrometer reading given there. Note the average tone-volume you get that evening by your gramophone, say "poor," "medium," "loud," or "very loud." Do this for any evenings you may select, and send results of about a dozen evenings to me, "Indicator," c/o THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, W.1. The main question we are getting at is—at what degree of atmospheric pressure and humidity do we get, and can expect to get, the maximum of volume? Of course, it is for fibreurs; steel reproduction is less fine and delicate, and it is more difficult to note the difference in the row.

\* \* \*

Oh, the fiendish friend, at whose invitation you are listening to his records, and keep getting out your note-book to take the number of a gem, and who dulcetly says, "I'm afraid you won't easily get it—it's a 'cut-out' now!" Or "you may get it in about three months, it's a German——" and so on. Criminal violence has often only been prevented by the thought of possible salvation at the Gramophone Exchange, New Oxford Street, where I have retrieved many a "cut-out," captured many a "foreigner," and led forth many a "victor"; but I surprised one tricky friend, when next day I told him I had got that Beethoven's *Sixth Symphony* on Polydor (thanks to Imhof's stock). By the way, this is really good, though it requires a "realist" box,



## H.M.V. RECORDS OF "OTELLO"

By JAMES HANLEY

"OTELLO" is to me one of Verdi's greatest operas, though *Othello* is not Shakespeare's greatest play. But the plot lends itself very well to operatic treatment, and a study of it in its entirety would serve to convince us of Verdi's power, and the fine libretto of Boito, a poet of distinction, has enabled the composer to keep faithfully to the spirit of the play, with the result that we have one of the finest operas imaginable.

Of the records from *Otello* there are two which seem to me to be the most popular. One is

*The Oath Scene. Si, pel ciel marmoreo.*

This is a duet for tenor and baritone and has been recorded by Ruffo and Caruso (D.K.114.) It is a magnificent number, and a first hearing of the duet by these great singers will, I think, make one want to hear more of the opera. Hearing Caruso makes one aware of the emptiness he has left in this world, and hearing Ruffo makes one wonder who this Cesare Formichi really is. Coupled with this record is the famous

*Credo in un Dio crudel.*

This has been recorded by three fine baritones, and I would place them in order thus: Ruffo, Amato, and Dragoni. Ruffo's is the finest of all. This is certainly Iago's best number. Next we have the famous

or one that is at any rate "brilliant" (an Exhibition); otherwise, with an "impressionist" large box, it may tend to have the massed effects solidified.

\* \* \*

The glorious freedom and licence of ignorance are often mine. I don't know Boito's idea behind the two sides of H.M.V. D.938, but if ever there were vivid contrasts on one record I made them in my imagination on this one. Heaven, and the other place! I played the other place first (*Prologo—Mefistofele*), and pictured a barbarous procession of leopards on the leash, captive giant apes chained to negro keepers, looming elephants in the gloom, and lastly a chorus of whipped slaves. Turned over—and the vision soared to angelic heights, celestial choirs, and everything was really "upstairs" (*Nerone—Gloria*). This side vies with the Palestrina one (Parlophone) of the Sistine Choir, for its suggestion of vocal legions.

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To an extent we fibreurs are "woodites," but there are a number of confrères who think a wooden external horn or internal amplifier best; and some who go further, and have a wooden tone-arm. Well, tone-taste is a very personal matter. My opinion, for what it is worth, is that having wood (fibre) at the initial point at which tone is generated, metal is afterwards an advantage—heavy brass so far as the tone-arm, cast iron in the bend of internal amplifier or at the junction of external horn, and semi-neutral thin iron horn or amplifier last. This combination makes for clean, clear, detailed resonance. Steel needles, undoubtedly, can do with as much subsequent wooden modification of their initial metallicism as possible.

*Niun mi tema.*

This has been recorded by Tamagno, De' Muro, and Paoli. The Tamagno rendering would turn one forever against operatic tenors, for it is over-done, too dramatic altogether. The best I believe is De' Muro's (D.B. 560). His is a capital organ, and he sings it with real feeling and true dramatic insight without making it melodramatic like Tamagno. His diction is clear, a rare thing amongst tenors to-day. Coupled with this is the fine aria

*Dio! mi potevi scagliar tutti i mali.*

In both the Paoli and De' Muro records the coupling is identical. But Paoli is poor indeed after hearing De' Muro's version. Like Tamagno he overdoes the thing, and in certain parts the voice tends to whiteness and the diction is not clear, being hurried and blurred. Both Paoli and De' Muro have recorded the

*Ora e per sempre addio.*

This is very fine, but again I prefer De' Muro (D.B.559). His is a very fine rendering, and to me he is the ideal Otello. This is where Otello bids farewell to fame. Again the diction is clear in the one case and blurred in the other. Paoli was dubbed the equal of Tamagno, but I think I much prefer Otello to be dramatic without being melodramatic. Of the



tenor arias I prefer De' Muro. He has a fine voice and knows how to use it. This tenor has never appeared in England or America to my knowledge, but has confined himself entirely to the Latin opera houses of Europe. Anyone who witnessed his creation of Folco in Mascagni's *Isabeau* will long remember it. He has given nothing for some time, and I hope the Gramophone Co. will get him to give us some more records, preferably *Otello* numbers. He is yet a young man, so the plea is legitimate, is it not?

We know that various letters have appeared in this journal asking for complete Italian operas, and though I remember seeing inquiries about *Il Trovatore*, I do not remember seeing any for *Otello*. I wonder how many are with me in pleading for a complete *Otello*?

We now come to the trios—

*Vieni, l'aula è deserta and Una vela! un vessillo.*

These are sung by Paoli, having the support of Goetzen and Salvati and of Goetzen and Sala (D.B.470 and D.B.467). They might have been more spirited anyway. My ideal

voices for these numbers would be De' Muro, Badini, and Sala. Badini, I may mention, is a very fine baritone and is the Rigoletto in the H.M.V. complete version of that opera. Still, on the whole they are very fine and help us to appreciate *Otello*.

I have forgotten to mention one other tenor record, that is  
*Esultate! l'orgoglio musulmano.*

I accord this record (D.B.559) the palm without premeditation. From the very first words of "Be welcome, be welcome" to the last "Viva Otello," we are treated to something really fine. And I recommend the disc. Otello suddenly enters in the middle of the record, and here you have the dramatic intensity of De' Muro to sit and listen to. His entry is like a thunderbolt, and he disappears as suddenly as he has come. Here again the chorus is very fine.

I do not know when these De' Muro renderings from *Otello* were published, but they are magnificent, and anyone who has not heard De' Muro has missed hearing the most popular tenor in Italy.



## SONGS OF A GRAMOPHILE

By C. S. DAVIS

### 1. *A Song of Steel.*

I sing of Steel, whose glittering point  
Makes cowards quake, and weaklings quail,  
Whose volume fills the world with song,  
Whose potency can *never* fail.

Before its charge the muted horn  
Yields forth its note; the wayward drum,  
Like thunder loosed upon the air,  
Speaks in a voice that erst was dumb.

The flute, the harp, the cymbalom  
Resound before its magic thrall;  
And in a trice the drawing-room  
Becomes a mimic Albert Hall.

And, not as with base substitutes,  
We heed The Voice despite its guise,  
Beneath Petmecky's immanence  
The singer sings before our eyes.

I sing of Steel, the Leveller,  
The If, The When, The Why, the How.  
Fibreurs, take heed; your fate is sealed:  
"If ye have ears, prepare to shed them now."

### 2. *O, Hall of Song.*

O, Hall of Song, O song-abiding Hall,  
Warble your wood notes "wild" that I may dote  
Upon the cloying sweetness of each note  
That from your polished triangle doth fall.  
Noiseless you ride upon the sacred wall,  
Nor mar the sinuous beauty of the track.  
No matter if mere "force majeure" you lack;  
Your pristine purity surpasses all  
The nasal gratings of the plebeian ore  
And seals your jointure with the connoisseur.

Ah, in the history of stylus lore

Your fame will stand "sans rapproche et sans peur."  
Knights of The Vegetable, I give you hail,  
And pray your twice-doped points may never fail

### 3. *Ballade of The Perfect Diaphragm.*

Some sing the praise of mica, some of tin;  
Of aluminium and cotton-wool;  
Some deem the tone of cardboard somewhat thin,  
And that of crêpe-de-chine a shade too full.  
I'm told the gramo-savants of Stamboul  
Are rather partial to banana skin.  
However that may be, one thing is clear,  
The Perfect Diaphragm will soon appear.

I hear that experts are inclined to think  
The present shape and form entirely wrong.  
Colour, they tell us, is the Missing Link;  
Amber for strings and wind; cerise for song.  
And if we'd have orchestral timbres strong  
We first must dip the diaphragm in ink.  
And though this rule perhaps may seem severe,  
The Perfect Diaphragm will soon appear.

A friend of mine has recently begun  
Experimenting with raw linseed oil,  
And claims that if you boil it in the sun  
And then apply it to a spiral coil  
Of thin iridium immersed in soil,  
The tone is like the booming of a gun.  
It follows that the end is *very* near:  
The Perfect Diaphragm will soon appear.

### *Envoi.*

Compton, the vagaries of gramophiles  
Are apt at times to be a trifle queer;  
But you'll admit, I think, when heads are heels,  
The Perfect Diaphragm will soon appear.



# Table-Talk

(A running commentary on matters of special interest or of particular provocation, which appear in the current numbers of THE GRAMOPHONE)

## I.—MAY.

BRUNO WALTER AND ALBERT COATES (page 460).—Compton Mackenzie says of these two conductors that "Bruno Walter is more romantic, not to say sentimental; Coates inspires more awe." The work drawing forth this compact criticism of two great interpreters is the *Death and Transfiguration* of Strauss.

It is by the operation of an almost unique perception of the loveliness of orchestral tone that Walter makes music take on the rich colours of sunrise and sunset. And it is his desire to wring every drop of tonal loveliness from orchestral sound which makes him over-sentimentalise music; because his inevitable *rallentandos* compel what (for most of us) is an excess of feeling. His Mozart and Schubert are weak, but his Wagner is glorious.

Coates inspires awe because his primary concern is for that power and passion which embody themselves in rhythm. Where Walter looks into the colours of a present moment, Coates looks along the path of a coming phrase, so that we are as it were thrust into the very heart of the thing, and with no chance of escape.

Walter and Coates, playing the same piece in about the same time, cause it to seem long and short respectively, for the reason that Coates works more from the vital centre of the piece.

When conducting, Walter seems to dart like a dragon-fly into every part of his band, while Coates stands higher and higher, until in the great climaxes he positively towers above band and audience, like a mighty statue. And while motionless as a statue, he seems to embody every turn of the rhythm in his bearing.

DEBUSSY (p. 462a).—Not the whole of Debussy's music is of the day-dreaming type. The *toccata in Pour le piano*, the *Fête* of the orchestral *Nuages*, the piano-piece entitled *Le vent dans la plaine*, and plenty of other pieces, are very robust and alert.

Yet the main quality of his art is that which, as Compton Mackenzie says, can be enjoyed only when one is mentally relaxed, for only when we are mentally relaxed can we brood imaginatively on the ideas Debussy evokes; not by beauty of form, energy of movement, or high aspiration, does Debussy try to hold us, but by a sort of meditative fancy, as when he sets before us *La Cathédrale engloutie* or *Danseuses de Delphes*.

Compton Mackenzie tells us that he always feels he is growing out of Debussy, though he finds he does not, and rather thinks he never will.

He feels he is growing out of him on those occasions when he happens not to want Debussy, yet experiments with him at the moment—or perhaps when he hears his music wrongly interpreted; Debussy himself played his pieces in a far more direct manner than that adopted by some concert performers.

FOLLOWING THE SCORE (p. 484).—Beginners should start to follow the performance of a string quartet or orchestral piece by help of an arrangement for piano solo—but not until they have learned to follow a song.

And they should let the Time and the Rhythm be their guide. No one can read a score who cannot count the beats in a bar while the bar is being played, for otherwise it is impossible to keep the place.

In very fast music, where there is only one beat to a bar, we have to read by what the Italians call the *ritmo di quattro battute*, which is the "phrase of four bars"; that is, we have to look at the music in sections of four bars.

I believe that some instruction in the "grammar" of music—its times, rhythms, cadences, and the like—is necessary before one can follow a performance with the eye helpfully on the printed page. There are plenty of text-books giving the instruction needed, but it is unfortunately mixed up with a mass of other matters, and I am unable to recommend a book to readers of THE GRAMOPHONE.

SCHUMANN (p. 500b).—Schumann was *not* brought up a lawyer. His people wanted him to be a lawyer, and he went to the university to study law; but he did not keep to the plans. E. M. Bicknell implies that his law studies prevented him from becoming a writer of luscious and sentimental music; this is foolish. By nature he was a poet of the fine introspective kind, with some of the clear vision of the classic masters, but more of the mentality of Jean Paul Richter.

CLAVICHORD RECORDS (p. 501c).—We ought certainly to agitate for some records of performance on the clavichord, also for some on the harpsichord. But for de Lawd's sake do not let us ask for the instrument and the performer to give us "the sob of the violin, the tremolo of the human voice," or any imitations of the string quartet, the bassoon, the horns, or the bell, book, and candle of the church.

These old instruments are charming enough, though little more than charming; and taste in them is an acquired taste. Dolmetsch naturally prefers the clavichord to the piano, because he has lived all his life in the old world of music; but in the same way the soldier prefers war.

For myself, the more often I hear a clavichord or harpsichord, the more grateful I am for the piano, even for music written before the piano was invented. Adrian Boult, the conductor of the Birmingham Festival Choral Society, gave a performance of the Bach *Mass in B minor* last winter, in which he had the recitatives accompanied on a harpsichord; the contrast between the massive choral tone, stately organ, and flexible orchestra and the thin, scratchy, tinkly harpsichord was most inartistic. When Bach thus used the harpsichord, it was in alternation with a band of about twelve and a chorus of about the same number. Nowadays we use it, as on the present Birmingham occasion, in alternation with a chorus of three hundred and a band of sixty or seventy.

THE B MINOR MASS (p. 502b).—I should not (at least for some time) advocate the recording of the *Et in unum*. This is a piece of highly scientific music, to enjoy which we have to know the special doctrinal purpose which Bach set out to express.

## II.—JUNE.

THE INDEX TO VOLUME 2.—This is an amazing thing; but what it epitomises is a thing even more amazing. Never since the dawn of time has any monthly publication, of those confined to one subject, contained a mass of material like that shown in this guide, until the second volume of THE GRAMOPHONE completed itself (or, as I expect the editorial staff would prefer me to say, was completed). Half the great performers in the world are named in the index, demonstrating that half the present musical work of the world is contracted into the gramophone and commented on in the pages of the paper; and it seems to me that there is hardly a corner in all musical history that is not penetrated.

Gramophonists will be grateful to all those who have so patiently created this abstract of the volume; and those subscribers who do not preserve their numbers intact will probably discover that, after all, the best way to organise their items of special interest is to have the monthly numbers bound together and to rely on the index.

OF CATALOGUES AND SCRAPBOOKS (p. 22).—John C. W. Chapman must have a good deal of leisure time, for his interesting scheme strikes me as elaborate enough for a public reference library.

The quickest plan is to have a number of folders in a box or cabinet, each with the name of a composer or the title of a subject, into which can be thrust any cutting or copied information. Material accumulates over many years, and since you cannot leave enough space in a scrapbook for later cuttings, you cannot possibly manage to bring together all that relates to one subject; consequently you have to make cross-references, and then when you want to follow up a line of research or study you have to gather round you several of these monstrous volumes.

Readers will perhaps be glad to be told that there are in England several Press-Cuttings Agencies who, for a small fee, will supply all the current references made in newspapers and periodicals to musicians in whom one happens to be particularly interested.

BACKHAUS (p. 39c) ETC.—Backhaus is well suited for the gramophone largely because of his fine rhythmic clarity.

I first heard him play in the Schubert *Wanderer Fantasie*, and wished that Schubert himself (who used to swear at the finale) could have heard Backhaus. The Dale *Sonata in D minor* was cut for the "Pianola" on my recommendation about the year 1911; and I heard from the Aeolian Company a few days ago that it has always had a steady sale. The *Iberia* works of Albéniz would record well in Backhaus's hands, because of that guitar-like



quality which marks them and all other genuinely Spanish piano-forte music.—These recommendations of the Rev. D. Campbell Miller are very wise. I will for myself add a "title," exercising equal wisdom; it is the little Schubert *Piano Sonata in A major, Op. 120*; the first movement is sweet and fanciful; the second is a moving *andante*; the third and last is a lightly brilliant *allegro*, with a few massive chords, the "second subject" of the finale has the most entrancing syncopation of all I know in music.

LONDON RONALD (p. 32a).—Sir Landon Ronald is interested to see how he is periodically acclaimed the special interpreter of this, that, and the other composer. I was talking with him last winter just before he went on to the platform after the interval to do the *Second Symphony* of Elgar, and he remarked that first it was Tchaikovsky the critics coupled him with, then Beethoven, and now for several years Elgar. "My dear fellow," he said, "it is all so-and-so rot."

Yet with due regard paid to Sir Landon's own opinion on the matter, it is not rot, so-and-so or otherwise; for he has during the past ten years given us the finest performances of the Elgar symphonies of any British conductor.

That he should do this is natural, because he has just the qualities Elgar's music requires in its interpreter—the large symphonic vision, the energy that produces powerful dynamic accent, the patience that carries one through lengthy passages which, for ordinary folk, may seem no more than head-music, made to form, and finally the understanding that expands continuously. Ten years ago Landon Ronald used to open the second symphony with a breathlessness and haste that confused the listener; to-day, he opens it steadily, so that from the first phrase you are lifted to the great height required for the reception of this superb composition. S.G.

(To be continued.)



## TRADE WINDS AND IDLE ZEPHYRS

### *The Royal Tournament*

Those who witnessed the Sword Swinging Display by a hundred men of the combined Services at Olympia will be relieved by the sight of the photograph on this page. It is always a relief to see how miracles are done.

### *London Dailies and the Gramophone*

A paragraph in this page last month has brought several protests from readers of the *Daily Herald*, who remind us that a column is given to gramophone matters on alternate Tuesdays, and that THE GRAMOPHONE has often been recommended to its readers by "Villiers Plush" and "John Christopher." We are glad to amend our strictures, and to congratulate the *Daily Herald* on having such staunch champions. The *Morning Post*, on the other hand, printed the following protest from the London Office on June 10th, which will be endorsed by most of our readers:—

"IGNORED AGAIN!—This is the title Mr. Christopher Stone (London Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE) gives to the following letter he sends to us. 'If music is the Cinderella of the Arts, the gramophone is the Cinderella of the musical world. Even wireless, elated by the new friendship of the theatrical managers, has had its head turned. Your "Wireless Correspondent" on Saturday last writes that George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* will be "played for the first time in this country" on June 15th. Even literally this is probably not true, but considering that the *Rhapsody in Blue*, played by Paul Whiteman's Concert Orchestra, with George Gershwin himself at the piano, has been well known on an H.M.V. record to the whole gramophone world for many months, the statement is inadequate.'"

The *Morning Post* actually had a leading article on the gramophone on May 27th, quoting the opinions of Lady Norah Bentinck. The heading is, "A New Influence"!

### *Suggestions for Recording*

People write to us giving long lists of works which ought to be recorded. No doubt they write the same to the recording

Companies. As soon as we have breathing space we must find time for a competition on the subject in order to collect really useful information as to people's wants, as we did with symphonies and concertos. The *Daily Herald* has a competition of this sort.

One correspondent instances the Minuet from Handel's opera *Berenice*. An excellent idea. Another remarkable gap is the *Eton Boating Song* which is now unobtainable on records even as a waltz. It is one of the most famous and favourite melodies in the world where it is known, and is matched with unforgettable verse. There is no record of Lully's *Plaisir d'Amour* which

McCormack sang as an encore at the Albert Hall the other day; nor of *Bois Epais*, another famous and lovely French song; nor of Keel's setting of *Jardin d'Amour*.

### *A Best Record*

One of these days we must have a symposium—"Which is the best record you ever made?" Mr. Sammons used to say that the *Passacaglia*, played by Lionel Tertis and himself unaccompanied (Voc. D.02019), was the most successful record he ever made; but he has done some wonderful work since he said that. Mr. Foster Richardson, the Principal of the Westminster School of Singing, writes an article about "What we sing—and why," in which he says that his record of Mr. H. R. Parsons' *Captain Blood* is "one of the best of several hundred records I have made." This is worth noting when the record is issued, because Mr. Parsons is an old follower of THE GRAMOPHONE, and his successes with dance tunes and songs composed especially for Vitaphone films have been most remarkable. He has the gift for facile popular melody-making "in the Blood"; and Paul Specht, no less than Foster Richardson, has testified publicly to this gift.





## Nicolas Nadejin

In case any readers may want to hear our Russian baritone, who is on tour with Madame Lydia Kyasht, the following dates may be of interest:—July 1st, Blackpool; 6th, Brighton; 13th, Bournemouth; 20th, Newcastle; 27th, Edinburgh; August 3rd, Glasgow; 10th, Dundee; 17th, Liverpool; 24th, Derby. M. Nadejin will be broadcasting from the London Station on July 14th in the afternoon.

## Sammons and Murdoch

On the last day of the heat-wave, June 12th, these two Columbia stalwarts gave a Sonata recital—Beethoven, Brahms, McEwen, and Franck—at the Wigmore Hall, and roused a torrid audience to fever heat of applause. (That Brahms *Sonata in G major* must be recorded.) Then they dashed off in a new Chrysler Six to Switzerland for a holiday, so that we shall not see them at the Gramophone Congress. Rumour says that some much-wanted records will be made in the autumn, under the new conditions; meanwhile a piano concerto will allay our impatience. But the Gramophile, seeing Cedric Sharpe in the audience, could not help regretting that the 'cellist of the Chamber Music Quartet is an H.M.V. artist, while the other three, Sammons, Tertis and Murdoch are in the Columbian fold. If only he could be lent! But these amiable arrangements are not yet usual in the gramophone world; perhaps because there is no room for due acknowledgments on record-labels!

## The Manufacture of Records

The following is the official account of a lecture delivered by Mr. H. E. Cowley to the Junior Institution of Engineers on April 24th, with the accompaniment of many exhibits and slides, on the manufacture of gramophone records:—

"Mr. Cowley described the preparation of the wax blanks that eventually became master records, and said that the essentials of a good wax were medium hardness, even density, correct amount of greasiness, and brilliant cutting properties. These qualities were necessary for producing a good polished surface and for taking a clean cut from the stylus on the recording machine. Mr. Cowley described the arrangement of a recording room, and the method of communicating the sound to the instrument. There were two types of recording machines, he said, one in which the needle feed was obtained by the table with the wax blank travelling, and the recording head or diaphragm being fixed, and the other in which the table revolved only and the recording head travelled across it. An interesting feature of the machine was that it was worked solely by a gravity motor in order to obtain perfect governing. With such an arrangement, however, the machine was not portable. Glass was generally used as the diaphragm.

After the master record had been produced, a matrix was obtained from it by an electrolytic process in which copper was deposited on the surface, the result being a metallic negative. The next step was to produce a metallic positive, or mother matrix, from the negative by a similar process. A record could not be pressed from the positive, and therefore it was necessary to produce what were known as stampers. These were made from the mother matrix by depositing first of all nickel and then backing up with copper. About fifty stampers could be obtained from one mother matrix. The actual pressing of records was done in an hydraulic press, the platens of which were jacketed so that steam and cold water could be passed through for softening and then hardening the record. To complete its manufacture, the record was trimmed and polished on the edge. Labels were fixed on during the stamping process."

## Our Contemporaries

An interesting note on the records of the London Symphony Orchestra was contributed by Miss Ursula Greville to the *Musical News and Herald* of June 6th, and appeared opportunely for the twenty-first anniversary concert of the London Symphony Orchestra at the Queen's Hall on June 9th. The hot weather, which kept a good many people away, had no effect on the brilliance of Koussevitsky's conducting of the *Meistersinger Overture*, the *Bach Suite in D*, the *Magic Flute Overture*, the *First Hungarian Rhapsody* (in F), and the *Fifth Symphony* of Beethoven; while Sir Edward Elgar conducted his own *Variations on an Original Theme*. It was an afternoon of great memories.

The *Music Teacher* for June contained analytical notes on Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony* and on Dvorák's *From the New World Symphony*, which may be strongly recommended to our readers who have the records of these works.

## A Reader's Lament

"I cannot play upon a reed  
As shepherds used to do;  
I like an instrument that's keyed,  
A saxophone—to moo  
Like cows about the pasture gate  
Telling the herdsman he is late.

But I can play the gramophone,  
And make a joyful sound;

I like a record full of tone,  
And, while it's twirling round,  
If our canary spills some sand  
The saxophone will just be grand."

—H. E.

## A NOTE ON THE CONGRESS.

IT is an excellent idea on the part of one of our advertisers to print a sketch-map on p. xxviii., which will direct our readers easily to the Central Hall and the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on July 9th. By this time most of those who can be present have made their arrangements. They have applied to the London Office for tickets (which cost 1s.), and if they want to come to the Gramophone Tests as well as to the Congress, they have received invitations to the former. There is no need to assure them that at the Caxton Hall they will spend an unusual and probably a very interesting evening. The entries for the Tests have been good, and the interlude of "direct" music, announced on p. 54, is an indication of the spirit in which these Tests are being organised this year—the spirit of a friendly and tolerable evening's entertainment combined with the real hard work of discriminating between the performances of various gramophones.

With regard to the GRAMOPHONE CONGRESS in the Central Hall, Westminster, this will be from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. It will be opened at 11 a.m. by Sir Richard Terry, who will be introduced by the Editor. The colour-scheme for the stalls has been arranged with some care, and it is pretty safe to say that nearly every machine, sound-box, and needle ever mentioned in THE GRAMOPHONE will be represented—and then some! It is only a one-day show;

the expenses for exhibitors are consequently very heavy; and we therefore beg our readers not only to make an effort to bring their friends to the Congress, but also to make the Congress definitely an occasion for laying in a stock of needles for the year, for ordering a few of the records that are on their waiting list, for making the long-delayed plunge about buying another sound-box, or even for ordering a new gramophone as an unbirth-day present for someone, self or another.

The Central Hall will probably be a noisy spot during most of the day, but silence will be enjoined for a short space at 3 p.m. for Mr. Isidore de Lara—if he is able to be present—so that he may make an appeal for his Imperial Opera Fund; and at 3.30 p.m. either Colonel Tatton or Major Bavin will address the Congress on the work of the Federation of British Music Industries.

Meanwhile, the Conference Hall, which adjoins the Congress Hall will be allotted by ballot throughout the day to all the exhibitors who wish to give short demonstrations of their gramophones, etc., and at 2.30 p.m. there will be a meeting of the National Gramophonic Society, which, by the way, will have its stall in the Central Hall also, so that readers who are not members may hear and see the records already issued and may be persuaded to join the Society on the spot.



# National Gramophonic Society Notes

[All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.]

**OBJECT OF THE SOCIETY:**—To aim at achieving for gramophone music what such societies as the Medici have done for the reproduction of the printed book.

**COST OF MEMBERSHIP:**—5s. a year subscription. £3 5s. half-yearly (on March 24th and September 29th) for records, packing and (inland) postage. Twenty-four twelve-inch double-sided records will be issued every year (i.e., they cost 5s. each, with 10s. a year for packing and postage. Members abroad or in the Dominions have a separate account for postage).

The Society is limited to 1,000 members.

The current year began on September 29th, 1924. New members will receive the Debussy and Beethoven quartets, the Schubert Trio and Schönberg Sextet, already issued, until the edition is exhausted (Debussy's Quartet in G minor, Op. 10, and Beethoven's Quartet in E flat, Op. 74—six records played by the Spencer Dyke String Quartet. Schubert's Piano Trio in E flat, Op. 100, played by Spencer Dyke, B. Patterson Parker, and Harold Craxton, and Schönberg's String Sextet, "Verklärte Nacht," played by the Spencer Dyke Quartet, with James Lockyer and E. J. Robinson, eight records; total, fourteen records).

As far as is practicable, members will be allowed to buy extra sets or extra single records at 5s. each and postage; but in no circumstances may they sell a N.G.S. record to a non-member for less than 7s. 6d.

A list of works suggested for recording by the Society is issued to members, and the Advisory Committee, which consists of the Editor, the London Editor, Messrs. W. R. Anderson, W. W. Cobbett, Spencer Dyke, and Alec Robertson, is largely influenced in framing the programme for the future by the opinions on this list expressed by members. It must be clearly understood, however, that the Society does not intend to duplicate any works published or in course of preparation by any of the Recording Companies, and that the Advisory Committee uses such information as it can acquire in order to avoid this duplication.

All works are recorded complete. They should be played at the rate of 80 revolutions a minute.

## The Congress

It is very much to be hoped that members of the Society will make an effort to come to the Gramophone Congress at the Central Hall, Westminster, on Thursday, the 9th. We shall have an N.G.S. stall there, and it will be an excellent opportunity for making acquaintances, asking questions and expressing views. If possible the test records made of the Mozart Oboe Quartet, of the Beethoven Quartet in F major, of the Orlando Gibbons pieces, and of Goossens's *By the Tarn* and *Jack o' Lantern* will be at the stall and will be played through from time to time. The new cardboard record-bags will also be on sale (2d. each) for members who want them for the first fourteen records.

It was hoped that Mr. Spencer Dyke and his colleagues would have played the Brahms' String Sextet in B flat, Op. 18, in the Conference Hall adjoining during the afternoon, so that members could hear it before it is recorded. But unfortunately this is impossible. On the other hand, M. André Mangeot and the Music Society String Quartet have kindly promised to take part in the short concert which will form an interlude to the gramophone tests at the Caxton Hall in the evening; so members who have written for tickets for the tests will have the pleasure of hearing the Gibbons and Goossens pieces.

Will every member please call at the N.G.S. stand on arrival at the Congress, in case there is any development of these arrangements?

## The Secretary

The secretarial work of the Society, which has hitherto been doubled with the other preoccupations of the London Editor, will in future be in the hands of the Hon. R. Gathorne-Hardy.

## The Third Quarter's Records

A circular has been posted to all members warning them of the almost certain delay in the issuing of the Beethoven and Mozart records. In both cases unusual difficulties have been encountered, and re-recordings have been necessary. With the thronging engagements of the Spencer Dyke Quartet, on the one hand, and

Mr. Leon Goossens, on the other, not to mention the difficulty of finding blank dates in the activities of the recording room, it has been a problem to arrange the re-recordings to suit everyone.

\* \* \*

## The Next Work

The Committee feels that the output of the first year will be well rounded off by the inclusion of a work by Brahms; and this coincides with the votes of members. The next two works on the voting list (see N.G.S. Notes for April, p. 433) are both Brahms—the Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34, and the String Sextet in B flat, Op. 18. In view of the opinion expressed by several members that all piano works should be postponed till the recording of piano tone reaches a more satisfactory standard, the Advisory Committee has decided on the String Sextet, and preparations are now being made to record it. The following is a quotation from Mr. T. F. Dunhill's *Chamber Music* (p. 139): "The combination of two violins, two violas, and two violoncellos evidently appealed very greatly to Brahms, and the pair of immortal compositions in this form which we owe to his genius are not only amongst his best works, but easily excel in beauty and importance any other string sextets composed either before or since." There follows an analysis of both sextets (that in B flat is the first), with musical quotations; and members may well be recommended to acquire this *Chamber Music*, a *Treatise for Students* (from Macmillan's *The Musician's Library*), since it deals with most of the works recorded or likely to be recorded for the gramophone.

\* \* \*

## America Approves

"I have to thank you for replacing the broken records" (see vol. 2, p. 337). . . "They are wonderful, the surface absolutely satisfactory, no scratch with the fibre needles I always use. The rendition is everything that can be desired, and the shading excellent. It is a great privilege to have the chance of listening to such a rare piece of music as the Schönberg Sextet. I feel that we owe Mr. Compton Mackenzie a greater debt than ever. To an Outlander THE GRAMOPHONE is invaluable, and now he has placed at our disposal these marvellous records."—(Dr. F. H. Mead, San Diego, California.)

"Your issues for the first two quarters have come to hand quite safely. I have no hesitation in saying that they include some of the best recording I have yet heard."—(Horace Middleton, New York.)

"My anticipation for the remaining issues runs high, in view of the records already received. They surely can be accepted as the standard for gramophone records, by which other recordings may be judged. You are also to be highly complimented on the type of compositions selected for recording. A few works of the contemporary composers are most certainly desirable. For my part I would gladly receive a quartet of Bartok, van Dieren or Schönberg. Reger surely has composed many of a thick, heavy beauty that would last well on the gramophone. The classical composers are, of course, the safest bet, especially in their less frequently heard works—quintets, piano quartets, etc. This is not to say that quartets are unwelcome. I feel as though I want every Beethoven and Brahms quartet in existence recorded by the superb Spencer Dyke Quartet; and some of the Haydn, and Mozart.

You have my eternal gratitude for the works already recorded. The Debussy—I have never heard, and perhaps never shall hear it done so well. The Schubert—nine sides of entrancing beauty. The Beethoven—an ideal performance of . . . well, Beethoven (give us one of his posthumous quartets). And, finally, the Schönberg, sometimes rising to great heights, and always music, living, pulsating."—(Dr. Kenneth E. Britzius, Minneapolis.)

\* \* \*

## Straits Settlements Also

"The Schönberg and Schubert records have also arrived. Needless to say I am charmed with them. By this time you must be getting quite bored with the flood of eulogistic letters. . . I feel that I must let you know what great pleasure the records have given me. . . I consider that both in execution and recording nothing better has yet been done in chamber music."—(S. Wood Hill, Penang.)



## CORRESPONDENCE

*De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.*

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

### THE GRAMOPHONE FOR BEGINNERS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—You are making an effort to increase the circulation of THE GRAMOPHONE, and I sincerely hope that you will succeed. For myself, I receive the journal free, by your courtesy, in an editorial capacity, and am so far safe from the proselytising assaults of your disciples. But I am sincerely moved to wonder if THE GRAMOPHONE would otherwise appeal to me.

I bought a gramophone three months ago. I am still amassing a stock of records. Even though I spend a pound a week, the process is slow. And—here's the point—THE GRAMOPHONE doesn't help me. You deal almost exclusively with what I may call "advanced" records; you cater for the "highbrows" of the business. What about us beginners?

This seems to me important. Before I go on to Schönberg and the *Enigma Variations*, and the second Rasoumovsky, I must—for obvious social reasons—have a stock of tried favourites. I must collect a hundred good, sound records of direct appeal. Take it, if you like, that I must be educated up to Schönberg. But you do not help me. Could not something be done for the "learners"? It is those learners who must furnish the greater number of recruits to your new subscription list.

This, by the way, is not a reactionary appeal. I don't want to hear Braga's *Serenata* on the gramophone or off it, nor will *The Rosary* delight me. But I do want help in the business of accumulating a preliminary stock of good stuff. I want companions for my Franck *Sonata in A* and my Chaliapine *Volga Boat Song*. Even one page of lists would do the trick.

Do give us a leg-up the Schönbergian heights.

Yours, etc.,

GEORGE BLAKE.

Editorial Offices,

*John o' London's Weekly.*

### THE EDITOR'S REPLY.

SIR,—I know what you mean, but suppose I were to write and ask your advice about forming a library, saying that I wanted to acquire more books which I could enjoy myself and also lend to my friends, such as the poems of Robert Bridges or Gogol's *Dead Souls*, but that I wanted to be educated up to such works as *Hamlet*, *Pippa Passes*, or Ibsen's earlier plays, would you not wonder how I could enjoy Robert Bridges and not be able to appreciate Shakespeare? I should perfectly well see your point of view about Ibsen, and I should by no means expect that because you liked *Dead Souls* you would enjoy *The Doll's House*. Nor should I be particularly worried by the thought that you might go to your grave without appreciating Ibsen, but it would worry me very much if you persisted in thinking *Hamlet* beyond you, while you were able to quote whole stanzas from Robert Bridges. I cannot help feeling that to prepare for you the list of music you ask is an impossible task. César Franck was for years one of the "highbrows' best silver teapots, and I suppose, now that the public puts him on the table without a qualm, we shall soon be told by our betters that all these years they have been keeping locked up, not a piece of genuine silverware, but a piece of electroplate. In fact, I have already detected signs of this. When Columbia brought out the *Symphony in D* the musical critic of the *Manchester Guardian*, seeking in vain for an answer to the riddle why César Franck should be so popular, could only conclude that the symphony wasn't nearly so good as he and his fellow collectors had once thought it. Now that the later Beethoven quartets are gradually becoming available for the general public, we shall presently be told that they are not so good as they seemed when they could be locked up and only enjoyed by a few rare

spirits. No art has suffered more than music from restricted distribution. I have already said twenty times, and I say it for the twenty-first, that the gramophone is doing for music what printing did for literature, and it is not reasonable to expect an individual like myself to gauge individual taste in music as I could gauge it in literature. You must remember that we have only had about three years of good music on the gramophone. I did rashly try, with the help of Archibald Marshall, to draw up a list of records that might be expected to appeal to anybody with ordinary taste, and I am sure that a copy of *Gramophone Nights* was sent to you for review. If we are making an effort to increase our circulation, it does not mean that we are only appealing at present to an eclectic or highbrow public. I am prepared to wager that our circulation is already higher than that of any purely literary paper published at the same price. It must be remembered that probably 75 per cent. of the people in England with musical taste will even now have nothing to do with the gramophone. The gramophone has taken the place of the mother-in-law as a stock joke among the paragraph writers in the Press, and a paper like ours is engaged on one side in fighting the ignorance and superstition of musical people who will not buy gramophones, and on the other in contending with the timidity and complacency of those who have. Luckily, we have among our readers what is probably a more solid phalanx of enthusiasts than any publication can boast anywhere in the whole world. On them I call to help you.

A prize of £5 will be offered for the best list of twenty-five records which are generally admitted to be good music, but which at the same time have been tested on the "man in the street" and found successful. You, Sir, on your side I shall hold in honour bound to order from this list any record which you do not already possess.

Your obedient servant,

COMPTON MACKENZIE.

[Particulars of this competition will be found on p. 68.]

### "PRINCESS IDA" RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I was already in possession of the *Princess Ida* records when the May number of THE GRAMOPHONE was issued, and was very interested in the review of them which it contained. I am hoping that Mr. W. B. Haworth will favour us with his views on the records, as he did when *Ruddigore* was issued. In the meantime the following notes may be of interest.

Although the title of side 1 is "Overture," there is no overture proper to *Princess Ida*, but instead a short "Introduction," which is recorded in full. In my set the labels of sides 17 and 18 are interchanged, *Death to the Invader* being labelled *When e'er I spoke sarcastic joke*, and vice versa. The following "cuts" have been made: The incidental music after the songs *Would you know the kind of maid* and *I built upon a rock*; the second verse of Hilarion's beautiful *Whom thou hast chained*; and four bars at the end of the quintet *The world is but a broken toy*. This last appears (to me) quite unnecessary. A point which may puzzle some who are not familiar with *Princess Ida* is that *I built upon a rock* comes after *When e'er I spoke sarcastic joke* on the records, but not in the score, or in (at least) some editions of the libretto. The record is correct, however, and I believe that I am right in saying that these numbers have been sung in this order from the very first production of the opera, the libretto being altered to suit. Perhaps some reader can confirm this. Yours sincerely,

London, N.W. 1.

R. WAILES.

[Mr. Haworth replies:—"It is most flattering of Mr. Wailes to ask me for my remarks on *Ida*. My own set has not reached me yet, but through the kindness of Messrs. Imhof I have been able to hear them. Space will not allow of a detailed criticism of each record, but while endorsing all your correspondent says, I would like to give a few notes on the caste. Hildebrand, of course, is superb—the name of Leo Sheffield is sufficient to guarantee this—and the same may be said of Hilarion (Derek Oldham). Cyril (Leo Darnton) is uneven, and at time the voice suggests that two people sang the part. In *Oh, dainty triole* he sounds choked at times, but he is good in the trio *Gently, Gently*, while his vibrato is unpleasant in *I am a maiden cold and stately*, and only a little less so in *Would you know the kind of maid*; although he's got plenty of go and life in this last. Florian (Sydney Granville) is weak in *Oh, dainty triole*, but, as he is good elsewhere.



I think this may be a fault in the recording. Henry Lytton gets right home with King Gama. What a wonderful comedian he is! The three sons of Gama are good and their Handelian song, *This helmet, I suppose*, a thing of joy. Ida herself (Winifred Lawson) has a beautiful voice and does justice to the music, while Bertha Lewis, like the artiste she is, brings out everything in the part of Lady Blanche. I liked Melissa (Eileen Sharp), too, particularly in her duet with Blanche, *Now wouldn't you like to rule the roost*, but I am afraid I don't appreciate Kathleen Anderson as Lady Psyche. She seemed to me to be shrill and not always in tune in *A lady fair*, as well as elsewhere. I only want to add one word of praise for the excellent chorus and the orchestra. What a joy is the accompaniment to *Ida was a twelve-month old* and how delicious is the humour of that for the Warriors' trio, *We may remark*."]

## GRAMOPHONE INTERPRETATION POLICIES.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—May I add a list to those already issued by you of works suggested for recording?

BACH.—Any of the orchestral suites, or the *Brandenburg Concerti*, *E major Violin Concerto* (played by Kreisler).

BEETHOVEN.—*B flat Trio*, Op. 97, *G major Violin Sonata*, Op. 96, any of the posthumous quartets not yet recorded (the *B flat* is particularly suitable). For these either the Lener, Flonzaley, or Rosé Quartets are desirable.

BRAHMS.—*G major Sextet* (No. 2), *C major Piano Trio*, *Clarinet Quintet*—the present version being very cut—the *B flat String Quartet* (those who heard the recent performance by the Lener cannot imagine a finer), and the *E minor Symphony* (conducted by Koussewitzky).

DEBUSSY.—*Nocturnes* for orchestra.

DELIUS.—*Violin Concerto*, played by Albert Sammons, *Concerto for Violin and Violoncello*, played by the Misses Harrison.

DUKAS.—A new and complete recording of *L'Apprenti Sorcier*, *La Peri*.

DVORÁK.—*Violoncello Concerto*, played by Casals; *Dumky Trio* (two delightful movements have already been recorded by the Columbia Company, why not the rest?).

GABRIEL FAURÉ.—This great composer has been entirely neglected, with the exception of a mutilated version of the *C minor Piano Quartet*, I suggest to begin with, the *G minor Piano Quartet* No. 2, and the wonderful late *Piano Trio*. (French players should be engaged for these.)

FRANCK.—Would the Gramophone Company follow up their enterprise in connection with the *Symphonie Fantastique* by engaging a French conductor and orchestra to make new records of the Franck symphony, which would come nearer to the composer's idea of it?

MOZART.—Any of the *Divertimenti*, or *Serenades*. These require a small orchestra and very careful rehearsing or they sound dull, which they are not.

PARRY.—As his greatest works are choral his name does not appear on any of the lists. Could a good choir be got to do the late motets, *Songs of Farewell*? Otherwise I suggest the great *Symphonic Variations for Orchestra*, which are best conducted by Dr. Adrian Boult.

RAVEL.—*La Valse*, conducted by Goossens, *Piano Trio*, and the *String Quartet*, played by a French quartet.

SCHUBERT.—*A minor Quartet*, *C major Symphony* (conducted by Weingartner, whose reading of this is an absolute revelation), the *B flat Trio*, and the *C major String Quintet*.

SCHUMANN.—*Dichterliebe* song cycle.

STANFORD.—Original Irish song cycles.

VAUGHAN-WILLIAMS.—The *London Symphony* complete (this should be conducted by Dr. Adrian Boult or Dr. Malcolm Sargent). *The Wasps Music*, the *String Quintet*, and in course of time the *Pastoral Symphony*.

It will be noticed that in some cases I have suggested the names of performers who should be asked to play or conduct the various works; and in this connection I should like to congratulate Mr. J. F. Porte on his admirable article in your June issue. The quality of the performances recorded is vital; doubtless we can all recall many cases of deep disappointment when the records of some long-wanted work are received—records of a performance well meaning and adequate, but uninspired. We have also been surprised by the cordial way in which such records are often received both by the public and by professed critics.

There are, I think, two reasons for this: Firstly, the recent advance in methods of recording and reproduction has been so rapid, that even musicians are inclined in listening to new records to concern themselves chiefly with the degree of technical excellence obtained; and secondly, the gramophone public is to a great extent a public that does not attend concerts very frequently; it is a public whose musical taste has been largely formed by the gramophone, and neither they, nor to some extent the critics who guide their taste, have the experience in judging a performance which is only acquired by frequent hearings of a variety of artists.

This fact, which at first sight so much facilitates the task of the recording companies, to whom all credit for their recent enterprise, should make them all the more careful even in their own interests to supply only the best available. Concert-goers know how rarely a performance of any given work seems to reproduce for them the living inspiration in which the composer wrote it. The memory of these rare occasions sustains them through many a dull performance after. But the gramophonist, in so far as he is distinct from the concert-goer, has no such memories; therefore adequate but dull performances of quartets, say, by Mozart, will, in the long run, lead him to look on Mozart as a dull composer, and after a time he will no longer buy Mozart records. After all, it is only the rare performance which really reproduces the composer—he is libelled by the others; therefore it is only the rare performances that should be made permanent; the lucky gramophonist will then escape the many hours of boredom or annoyance suffered by the concert-goer. The idea that a gramophone library of the classics can be produced by getting sufficient works performed by players competent to "play the notes as written" is ridiculous.

It would be easy but invidious to give examples of what I have said; I will mention only the *B flat Quartet* of Mozart, not usually considered one of the most interesting, which recovers all its intrinsic vitality in the wonderful performance recently recorded by the Lener Quartet. Again those who have had the chance of hearing a Mozart symphony played in Vienna, where Mozart and Schubert are bred in the bone of players and listeners alike, know how utterly different it becomes from the same symphony in the average English performance. (As Mr. Porte says, why was Mr. Coates chosen to conduct the *Jupiter*? Because he is a great operatic conductor?).

To bring too long a letter to an end. Two things are needed for the happiness of those who wish to make the gramophone a substitute for the many concerts they are prevented from attending; first, that the recording companies be guided with great tact and discrimination; second, and more important, that a journal like yourselves should employ only trained musicians of catholic knowledge and experience to criticise new productions, and that these critics be absolutely outspoken. An individual concert performance may call for leniency; it is finished when the concert is over; but when a work is once recorded it may be years before it is done again, if ever. This last I have called the most important, because the experience of the last three years has shown how much can be achieved by your constant criticism and constructive effort.

Bidborough.

Yours etc.,

F. V. SCHUSTER.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Porte's article on orchestral conductors is very interesting, but, as the Editor remarks, rather provocative, and I find it especially difficult to understand the general tendency to underrate Sir Landon Ronald as a conductor for recording purposes, because it is such a strong point in his favour that, whoever the composer may be, one can count on a thoroughly sound, musicianly rendering, free from any of those exaggerations or stunts which, however interesting they may be when heard at a single concert, are apt when constantly reproduced to pall upon one like a trick too frequently repeated. Mr. Porte refers to the two Tchaikovsky symphonies, but with all deference to his opinion I find more lasting enjoyment in Sir Landon Ronald's than in Mr. Albert Coates' because I find rather irritating the latter's habit of dragging the tempo of a movement in order to work up a series of alternative climaxes. This sort of thing may not matter so much with Tchaikovsky, although some might think that there is no need to underline his emotionalism, but Heaven preserve us from original and individual interpretations of Brahms, for example. As for the suggestion that Siegfried's *Funeral March* and the *Entry of the Gods* should be re-recorded, if there are in existence two better orchestral records than these I have yet to hear them, unless one might perhaps mention the *Symphonie Fantastique* of Berlioz, which should on no account be missed by any discerning reader of THE



GRAMOPHONE. Apart from being most extraordinarily interesting music they seem to me to reach the high-water mark of recording. As it is somewhat of a hazardous proceeding to recommend records to others who may use different methods of reproduction I would mention that these opinions for what they are worth have been based on results with the H.M.V. No. 2 box and fibres, and in this connection I should like to thank our Editor for his *amende honorable* to fibrists, which is only what might have been expected from him. There is doubtless much in his contention that we are apt to adopt a too superior attitude, and this may be due to the fact that anyone who uses fibres does so from honest conviction, not ignorance, because most people started with steel, and those who give them up are perhaps rather inclined to look back on them as earlier steps in the progress that we all, who are keen enthusiasts, hope we are making. Mr. Davis' admirable article should be read by everyone interested in this subject in conjunction with Mr. Wilson's articles on record wear.

Having apparently wandered into nearly every subject dealt with in an exceptionally interesting number, dare I venture to suggest that the absence of feminine contributions to the gramophone should not surprise such a keen student of human nature as the Editor, or a gentleman adopting such a pen-name as "Scrutator." I think you will find that women are not, as a rule, really very fond of music. They like going to concerts, but are generally far keener on the personality of the artiste than on his music, which they are apt to regard as an incentive to animated conversation.

Purley.

Yours truly,

LIONEL GILMAN.

#### MISCELLANEOUS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Referring to the Editor's remarks in the May number, I should like to state that I personally obtain results with fibre needles equal in every respect to steel, by using the following combination: New Columbia cabinet machine and sound-box, Wild or Astra semi-permanent fibre needles, and Daws-Clarke's needle-tension attachment, and even with my new Columbia portable model this combination gives perfectly clear and loud results out of doors (on the river). The new Kreisler (Mozart) *Concerto*, the Parlophone *Scheherazade* set, the H.M.V. *Prince Igor* dances, all the N.G.S. records, and the H.M.V. *Ring* and *Tristan* all reproduce to perfection in this manner. The only loud records I have had failures with are the Parlophone *Vatican Choir* discs.

To anybody interested in the French H.M.V. catalogue, I would recommend the following which I bought during a recent visit to France:—W.493, *Recit. and Cavatina* from *Prince Igor*, by Friant, of the Opéra-Comique (with a solo from Messenger's *Amour Masqué*, by Marcelle Ragon, on the reverse); W.531, *Arias* from *Il Barbiere* and *Figaro*, by Willy Tubiana; Y.29, First Act duet from Massenet's *Manon*, deliciously and tenderly sung by Campagnola (Opera, Paris) and Berthe César (Opéra-Comique); P.454, *Sérénade* and *Fête complète* from *Don Giovanni*, by Bauge (Opéra Comique).

A batch of Polydor records I've just received are also of outstanding merit; the forward tone, perfect balance of voice or solo instrument and orchestra, and finish of the surface, are all of really first-class quality. The undermentioned are without a doubt some of the best recordings yet heard here:—65987, *I Palpiti* (Paganini), by Vasa Prihoda; 65700, *Presto and Prelude* (Bach), by Wil. Kempff; 72695, Two arias from *Samson and Delila*, by Sigrid Onegin; 85302, *Don Pasquale* and *Traviata* arias, by Ivogün; 85297, *Ave Maria* and *Russian Vesper Song*, by Hempel; 72893, *Koenigliche Schaefer* and *Gaertnerin aus Liebe* (both Mozart), by Claire Dux; 65871-2-3, Strauss' *Tod und Verklärung*, by the Berlin Philharmonic; 62436-7-8, *Dorfmusikanten* (Mozart), by Tonkünstler Orchestra.

Yours faithfully,

G. T. LOCKER.

London, W. 4.

#### POLYDOR RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Allow me to endorse all that has been said by your recent correspondents in praise of the Polydor records. I have just received from England Beethoven's *Third* and *Fourth* symphonies. The surface is good, equal to the best H.M.V.'s, and even approaching the new Columbias. Then again the faint "scratch" is always even. The execution and shading are excellent. The Germans seem to me to manage their trumpets in recording exceedingly skilfully. They are not so loud as in other

records and they do not drown the strings in full orchestra. The flute parts in the slow movement of the *Eroica* are especially well done. Both symphonies are a joy. It is needless to say the works are entirely uncut. We have now all Beethoven's symphonies issued by this company, except the second. The ninth, as issued by them, has been published by the Vocalion Company in this country. Supplemented by two of these records (missing in the Parlophone version) I prefer the Parlophone performance, however. The following symphonies are also published by the Polydor Company: Mahler's *Second (Resurrection)* (eleven 11in., d.s.); Schumann's *Fourth*; Brahms *C minor*; Haydn's Nos. 6 and 88; Mozart's No. 41 (*Jupiter*), the *Adagio* only; Bruckner's *Eighth* and Bruckner's *Seventh*. Add to this the only orchestral rendition I know of Ivanov's *Caucasian Sketches*, and a complete version of the *Kreutzer Sonata* (four d.s.). Vocal and other instrumental records have been dwelt on sufficiently by your other correspondents.

Yours faithfully,

FRANCIS MEAD.

San Diego, California.

#### WHICH SHALL I BUY?

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I have been a reader of THE GRAMOPHONE since January (it was one of my New Year's resolutions, the only one I have kept). I wish to thank you for the great pleasure you have afforded me by means of your great little journal. (I wish I could leave the "little" out, though even as at present it is wonderful value for money). I have had my gramophone for, say, six months, and till now I have been hearing and buying almost all vocal records, which I like very much. (This is natural since they were bought under the supervision of THE GRAMOPHONE, so to speak.) I was quite satisfied with my collection until I read the articles on Chamber Music.

I noticed these articles with misgivings, thinking here we have a waste of useful space, space that could be far more helpfully employed than repeating a mass of catalogue information. Nevertheless, being one of that strange race called enthusiasts, I read them through. They revealed several things to me, among which was, that you, sir, are a human person and not just an editorial "we." ("My vote goes to the Parlophone version, it is cheapest.") Another was that chamber music must be really great to enable such absorbingly interesting articles to be written about a mass of catalogue detail.

It is now that I am literally stumped, I don't know where to begin. I see one tune followed by remark, "as easy as walking downhill on a spring morning"; another by "glorious, but simple music." Which shall I buy? Echo answers "Both," and I wish I could, but since pockets are limited and I am a beginner I must start somewhere. I therefore come to THE GRAMOPHONE for advice. Will you, sir, print a list of about half a dozen graduated chamber music records suitable for the education of such a novice as myself. After these I suppose I'll be able to shift for myself with the aid of the above-mentioned articles.

Yours faithfully,

London.

M. KREMER.

[Try this:—(1) Schumann, *Piano Quintet* (Vocalion, 2 records, 9s.); (2) Mendelssohn, *Trio in D* (Voc., 2 records, 9s.); (3) Schubert, *Trio in B flat* (Voc., 2 records, 9s.); (4) Haydn, *Quartet in F* (Columbia, 2 records, 15s.); (5) *Slow Movement* from Tchaikovsky's *Quartet in D* (Parlo, 1 record, 4s. 6d.); (6) Grieg, *Sonata for Viola and Piano* (Voc., 3 records, 13s. 6d.). I have not been influenced merely by the wonderful value for money in choosing these records, but more by their melodiousness from the standpoint of one who is standing on the threshold of the great world of chamber music. £3 will give you a season ticket.—ED.]

#### "PHOTOGRAPHS OR OIL PAINTINGS"?

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—In a recent informal talk to the Liverpool Gramophone Society, you put in a strong and excellent plea for the development of the gramophone as an efficient machine to reproduce musical sounds exactly as they are made by existing musical instruments, rather than as a musical instrument itself, which, by means of fibre needles and romantic sound-boxes, makes charming melodies of its own, soothing and delightful to the senses, but totally unlike the original noises.

For my own part, I am heartily with you in your desire to see a more perfect and efficient machine evolved, and when you hit on the brainy idea of describing the divergent ideas of the "Realists" and "Romantics" on this subject, as the difference



between an appreciation of photographs and of oil paintings, one felt you had to a certain extent got the right simile, but at the same moment, you got the situation terrifically involved in my mind. We have an old saying in Lancashire, "There's nowt so queer as folk, especially wick uns" (live ones), and as most gramophone lovers are essentially "wick" (and generally very much so), the matter cannot be left at that point. Now I, as a realist, prefer by far the real and genuine article by way of sound, a photograph and not an oil painting, just as a keen amateur photographer, I, as a Purist, prefer a straight photograph to a faked one. (Purists believe and hold that if you point your camera at a beautiful subject, the view-point having been carefully selected, and carry out afterwards the technique of the job, you will get a beautiful picture, without brushwork, faking, or hand-work on the prints.) But many amateur photographers, mostly highbrows, are romantics; they love to daub and mush their photos about with brushes and pigments until, whatever else you may call them, they are certainly not photographs; so that a photograph may be either romantic or realistic.

So with oil paintings; personally I prefer the realist school, the pre-Raphaelites and those who follow in their steps; but alas! I also love the works of Turner, and he surely was romantic, so that to get round to the point I am slowly and laboriously coming to, are we not mostly a mixture of both, and do our varying moods not infrequently change from realist to romantic? I feel quite sure that you were in a most really realistic mood when you portrayed the characters in "Rich Relatives" and "Poor Relations," but what about "Guy and Pauline" and "The Passionate Elopement"? Oh, dear! They simply ooze with romanticism (please don't deny that), and as I like all the four of them I'm as bad as you are. So that being "wick," and as a direct consequence "queer," while I am in principle a realist of realists, I often like to try a fibre needle and romantic sound-box. I don't pretend that it is giving me the genuine article, or even a "photograph," but it's awfully beastly jolly nevertheless, while the comfortable feeling that my records are not wearing is worth a bit, even to my realistic mind; nor does it alter the fact that I much prefer the steel needle and realistic sound-box.

In other words, I have a deep and genuine liking for both photographs and oil paintings, and so far from finding anything incongruous in the two, I find the study of paintings very helpful to my sense of photographic art. Whether my occasional romantic inclinations are in any wise helpful to my realistic study of gramophone reproductions, I don't know, perhaps you can tell me. If you can do so without getting yourself as involved as I feel I have done,

I shall remain,

Your profoundly thankful,

"SCRUTATOR."

St. Helens.

#### HECTOR BERLIOZ.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Anderson's notes on Berlioz omitted several little details, which whilst they are comparatively unimportant *qua* details might have served considerably to build up an impression of Berlioz and a new understanding of his music; to render more understandable his extravagantly weird life.

Berlioz showed his first musical leanings by learning to play the flageolet. His continual—almost continuous, he tells us—tootlings on this instrument got on his father's nerves, so much so that when young Hector wished to learn the piano his parents refused for fear that he might become too enraptured with this new and more responsive instrument. Consequently Berlioz' is not a harmony founded upon the pianoforte keyboard as were Beethoven's, Schumann's, Liszt's, César Franck's, and Brahms'.

When Berlioz ultimately decided in favour of a musician's life as against the "horrors" of surgery his father was broadminded enough to see reason and to agree to his going. But Hector's mother did not; she was an incredibly narrow-minded woman, and if we are to judge from Berlioz' autobiography, it is from her that he inherited his passionate temperament. Berlioz himself tells us of the interview with his mother. She pleaded with him, and, finding her pleading vain threw herself in a frenzy of anger at her son's feet, begging him to refrain from taking this rash step. Her agitation was not due to maternal fears—rather due to her misgivings as to the dishonour she felt sure her son would bring on the family! As his aunt told him: "We must try to keep the family respectable." It was a bitter moment for Berlioz, but his mind was made up and he went to Paris to study secure in his knowledge of harmony and his skill to play the flageolet and the guitar. Can it be

wondered that he came through this first period a hardened cynic? Unfortunately for him Berlioz had no sense of humour or he would have seen that the treatment his contemporaries received at his hands as a critic was exactly the sort of thing he was forever railing at the critics for dealing out to him. He could not understand Wagner's music, and he hated it. His enmity with Cherubini was one of the chief causes of his being so long delayed the Honour of the Prix de Rome. How this mutual hatred sprang up was really farcical; Cherubini upon coming into office had made several minor reforms in the Conservatoire, such as making the male and female students enter the building by their own respective doors at opposite ends of the house. Berlioz did not know of this reformation and entered by the "Female" entrance. Cherubini heard of this and came to him in the library during the hours it was free to the students. Very foolishly the Italian started reproving Berlioz in a blustering way; a light to the fuse. Berlioz "answered back," and Cherubini in his turn, flying into an undignified rage, refused him the further right of using the library. Berlioz refused to go, and the Italian called for the porter to "put him out." Then began an exciting chase round the peaceful library, overturning chairs and desks and causing a considerable commotion. Berlioz soon decided he had had enough and ran lightly to the door, where he stayed long enough to hurl defiance to the disgruntled porter and his "chief." Curiously enough Berlioz was later appointed librarian in spite of the fact that Cherubini was still in office.

Berlioz married Henriette Smithson, a Shakespearean actress with whom he had been long infatuated, although until just before the marriage Miss Smithson had been too preoccupied to notice him much. They had one son, Louis, who was in after years a source of considerable anxiety to his father; he developed an exceedingly weak and rash character.

If his own critics were merciless Berlioz was no less; he was violent, and it must be confessed even boorish at times. He tells us a witty story of the first performance of Cherubini's opera, *Ali Baba*. The music was empty and academic, absolutely barren of ideas. In the middle of the overture Berlioz jumped to his feet in the pit and shouted: "Twenty francs for an idea!" Towards the end of the first act he again rose: "I raise my bid; thirty francs for an idea!" At the beginning of the second act he raised the bid to forty francs and as the finale was reached he got up and walked out crying: "I give it up; I'm not rich enough!"

I saw the revival of the *Trojans* in Paris with Madame Demougeot as Dido. It is profoundly interesting music and deeply felt. One is pleasurably surprised by the absence of obvious "clichés" such as overwhelm all the operatic works contemporary with *Les Troyens*, with the exception of the Wagnerian opera. Perhaps if Berlioz had been a German he would now be considered as an extra to the famous three "B's," but if he had been he might have been more phlegmatic and his charming and exciting Gallic incoherence would have been lost.

We want a lot more of his works recorded. If the French "branch" of the His Master's Voice Gramophone Company think fit to record his *Symphonie Fantastique* as well as a completely representative version of *Pelleas and Melisande* of Debussy, why can't we have excerpts from the *Trojans* and, say, the whole of *The Damnation of Faust*? Surely enough English amateurs have murdered the latter piece. We in England shall probably never hear *Les Troyens* if it is not recorded. This is a broad hint to the recording companies.

Yours faithfully,

Wealdstone.

B. D. W.

#### AN INDIRECT HIT.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

SIR,—I see the following in your current issue: "Layton and Johnstone are so good that they almost made *Tea for Two* and *I want to be Happy* as wonderful as we have been told they are. To read the dramatic critics one might have thought that a new Sullivan had appeared. My good friend Mr. Percy Scholes recently took me to task in *The Observer* for my reference to the bursts of unanimity in which critics indulge. Well here's an instance of it. *Tea for Two* is as silly and sickly a song as I have ever heard, but to read the allusions to it in the Press one might suppose that the words were by Heine and the music by Schumann, each writing at his best." I beg to be allowed to say that nothing I wrote in defence of critics had reference to the dramatic critics writing of music. Pray continue to express yourselves as you like about these!

Yours sincerely,

Bedford Square, W.C. 1.

PERCY A. SCHOLES.

(Correspondence continued on page 98.)



## THE SAVOY ORPHEANS

THE Savoy Orpheans have never lacked publicity. They have been the darlings of gods and men—including goddesses and women—from the cradle, and no one grudges them their position as the best-known dance band in the world. Why should anyone? They not only play with amazing skill and charm; but they have, even now, all the engaging freshness and modesty of great conquerors. I saw them at the Hippodrome the other day, just before *Better Days* came to an

hundred to a thousand current tunes in their heads change their programme gradually but completely about every three months. This is the sort of thing which is ageing my colleague Richard Herbert.

Let us concentrate for a moment on the gramophone records. The first forty or so were issued by Columbia, after which H.M.V. secured the services of the Orpheans and is still issuing their records regularly. The size of the orchestra in the



Photograph by Hana.

abrupt end; and though their clothes were not quite so smart as in this photograph of them, the air of their conductor, Mr. Debroy Somers, when he acknowledged the frantic applause of the audience, was as pleased and ingenuous as if it had been their first appearance in public. This took my fancy very much; it seemed such a good indication of the spirit which imbues all their work. Of course it may have been the consummate acting of a bored genius, but it deceived me completely.

If a million couples have danced to their playing at the Savoy, how many millions have heard them on the wireless and the gramophone? One is told that five millions of their records have already been issued to the public by H.M.V. alone. One is told that "three to five hundred new dance pieces are composed every week," and that every week "thirty or forty new items are added to the repertory of the Band," and that the Orpheans who at a conservative estimate carry from five

recording room varies, according to the tune, from twelve to eighteen players. Sometimes more brass or more strings are required than at other times; sometimes one may detect the bass clarinet or the thrum of steel guitars. It all depends upon the orchestration—a department for which Mr. Debroy Somers is himself responsible but in which he is helped by a staff of three or four "arrangers."

Half a dozen test records are often made before the critical taste of the experts is satisfied with a tune; but as topicality is the essence of dance music the records once passed are issued with lightning speed from Hayes. By the time that this appears in print, the latest records made by the Orpheans—*Two Eyes*, *Poor Little Rich Girl*, *Seminola*, and *Blue Evening Blues*—will very likely be in my readers' hands and hearts.

My thanks are due to Mr. de Mornys and to the management of the Hippodrome for much courtesy.

PEPPERING.



# Analytical Notes and First Reviews

## MORE BEETHOVEN SYMPHONIES

(See June No., p. 33)

**PARLOPHONE.**—E.10311-2-3 (three records, 13s. 6d.).—**Opera House Orchestra**, conducted by Dr. Weissmann: **Symphony No. 1 in C major, Op. 21** (Beethoven).

**PARLOPHONE.**—E.10314-5-6-7 (four records, 18s.).—**Opera House Orchestra**, conducted by Dr. Weissmann: **Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36** (Beethoven).

**PARLOPHONE.**—E.10299, 10300-1-2-3-4-5 (seven records, 31s. 6d.).—**Opera House Orchestra**, conducted by Dr. Weissmann: **Symphony No. 3 in E flat major (Eroica), Op. 55** (Beethoven).

**COLUMBIA.**—L.1640-1-2-3 (four records, in album with notes, 30s.).—**London Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by Felix Weingartner: **Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67** (Beethoven).

**PARLOPHONE.**—E.10318-19-20-21-22 (five records, 22s. 6d.).—**Opera House Orchestra**, conducted by Dr. Weissmann: **Symphony No. 6 in F major (Pastoral), Op. 68** (Beethoven).

Just as we are going to press there arrive no less than five Beethoven symphonies, Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 6 (Parlophone), and No. 5 (Columbia). It is impossible in the small time available to give them the attention they deserve, and these notes must be regarded as very hasty first impressions. One or two obvious facts strike one immediately. In the first place the Parlophone issues complete their series of the nine symphonies; Nos. 4 and 5 appeared and were reviewed last month, No. 9 came out last year, and I understand that Nos. 7 and 8 are on the market, though I myself have not seen or heard the records. It is also noteworthy that with the publication of No. 6 (the *Pastoral*), the last of the list of works recommended for reproduction in our Symphony Competition last year becomes obtainable by those who can afford it.

My general feeling about the Parlophone records is that they improve as they go on; not that the *First Symphony* is bad, it is not, but the *Third* is much better, and the *Sixth* better still. The weakness in the wood-wind section that I remarked on last month is still apparent, though again the defect is less obvious in the later works. Generally speaking it may be said that the company has been most successful in the slow movements and *Scherzos*. Elsewhere the woodwind deficiencies are, on the whole, more serious and the brass tone has rather an "edge" on it. I found, indeed, that on a small instrument the entry of the trumpets very often led to "blasting," though I am bound to say that on the Balmain instrument the trouble disappeared. But, of course, heavy works of this type need a largish gramophone to do them full justice.

The *First Symphony* was first performed in 1800, immediately after its composition; the *Second* came out in 1803, the *Third* in 1805, the *Fourth* in 1807, and the *Fifth* and *Sixth* in 1808. The whole series of six therefore cover a period of rather more than eight years of steady progress. The *First Symphony*, in spite of the pundits, has very little in it that foreshadows Beethoven's later manner; both here and in the *Second* he is, in the main, an apt pupil of Mozart and Haydn, though in the latter work there are moments (such as the last few pages of the *finale*) where his individuality is plainly beginning to assert itself. In the *Third Symphony*, as everyone knows, he found his feet; the *Fourth* and part of the *Sixth* have passages in which he seems momentarily to glance back at his earlier style, but these are comparatively unimportant, and in the *Fifth Symphony* (which was actually completed after the *Pastoral*) there is hardly a sign of them.

Those who wish to take the splendid opportunity that these records afford of studying Beethoven's development must apply to one of the works on the subject for such help as they need. I have decided to make no analyses; my inquiry last month as to readers' wishes on this point has brought some kind replies for which I sincerely thank the writers, but the demand for analyses is clearly insufficient to justify my filling up the large amount of valuable space that would be necessary. I give, however, references to Eulenburg's miniature scores, showing where the breaks between the records occur (there are no cuts in any of the symphonies, though some of the repeats are omitted) and a few notes as to the reproduction.

*First Symphony*—Side 1: To page 11, bar 1. Side 2: To the end of the first movement. Side 3: To page 34, line 2, bar 1. Side 4: To the end of the second movement. Side 5: Minuet and trio. Side 6: *Finale*.

When one has said that the wood-wind is weak and the brass a bit rough, one has exhausted one's strictures on an otherwise good rendering. The strength of the music is well brought out in the performance and the peculiarities that make the symphony notable are easily caught by the hearer. Among these one might mention the interesting opening of the second movement and the effective use of the drum later on, and the high speed of the minuet, which is in reality a *scherzo*, must have seemed a surprising innovation at the time it was written. The string tone, by the way, is excellent throughout, as usual in Parlophone records, though the *pianissimo* is occasionally so soft as to be almost inaudible.

*Second Symphony*—Side 1: To first note of page 7. Side 2: To page 22, end of bar 2. Side 3: To end of first movement. Side 4: To page 45, line 1, bar 1. Side 5: To page 64, line 1, bar 4. Side 6: To end of second movement. Side 7: *Scherzo* and trio, and *finale* to page 78, line 1, bar 6. Side 8: To the end.

The oboe is very weak in the opening introduction, though the wood-wind comes into its own in the second subject of the first movement. The records of the second movement (which is one of my favourites) are very good, especially the last two, but the oboe is too modest again in the *Scherzo* and *Finale*. The *finale*, too, seems to me a trifle on the fast side, but this is a small defect in an otherwise most satisfactory performance.

*Third Symphony*—Side 1, to page 15, bar 3 (end of the exposition). Side 2: To Page 28, bar 3. Side 3: To page 43, bar 4 (not a very good join, but perhaps the best possible). Side 4: To end of first movement. Side 5: To page 70, bar 1. Side 6: To page 78, line 1, bar 5. Side 7: To page 88, bar 1. Side 8: To end of second movement. Side 9: To page 110, end of line 1. Side 10: To end of *scherzo*. Side 11: To page 136, line 1, bar 4. Side 12: To page 147, line 2, bar 3. Side 13: To page 160, bar 2. Side 14: To the end.

The recording here shows a marked improvement on that of the first two symphonies. The offending oboe, for instance, behaves much better in such places as the funeral march, and the balance is juster than heretofore; the *Scherzo* is particularly good. The worst thing in the symphony is the opening chord, which, by some unfortunate accident, does not sound simultaneous. There is also a drum note (page 99, bar 3) which hides its light under a bushel; it is there all right, I ran it to earth on the Balmain instrument, but it can hardly be said to count. Apart from these trifling errors I have nothing but praise for a notable interpretation of a superb work that has not hitherto been recorded complete, as far as I know.

*Sixth Symphony*—Side 1: To page 16, line 3, bar 2. Side 2: To end of first movement. Side 3: To page 45, bar 2. Side 4: To page 57, line 1, bar 1. Side 5: To page 69, bar 2. Side 6: To end of second movement. Side 7: To page 100, line 2, bar 3. Side 8: To page 118, bar 1. Side 9: To page 140, bar 2. Side 10: To the end.

The balance here shows a further improvement and for the most part needs no criticism, though there are just a few lapses (as on page 49). The bird business in the second movement comes out well, although the nightingale (flute) is rather drowned by the rest of the aviary. The comic bassoon in the *Scherzo* is most amusingly in evidence, and I have never heard the storm so effective. For the first time I felt it to be the finest thing in the symphony. The last movement is well recorded, though it has always seemed to me a dull business. It would be better, I think, without the trumpets. I suppose one dare not tamper with Beethoven's scoring, but I wish the players of these brutal instruments had been a little more merciful.

I noticed throughout the symphonies that Dr. Weissmann keeps his *tempi* very deliberate. Occasionally he gets a little too slow (as in the beginning of the second side of the *Eroica*), but this tendency is a great relief after the methods of some conductors who always seem to be playing Beethoven against time. Weingartner, in the Columbia *Fifth Symphony*, shows, as might be expected, a similar restraint. His conception is certainly less sensational than that of Sir Landon Ronald. As to Dr. Weissmann, I have



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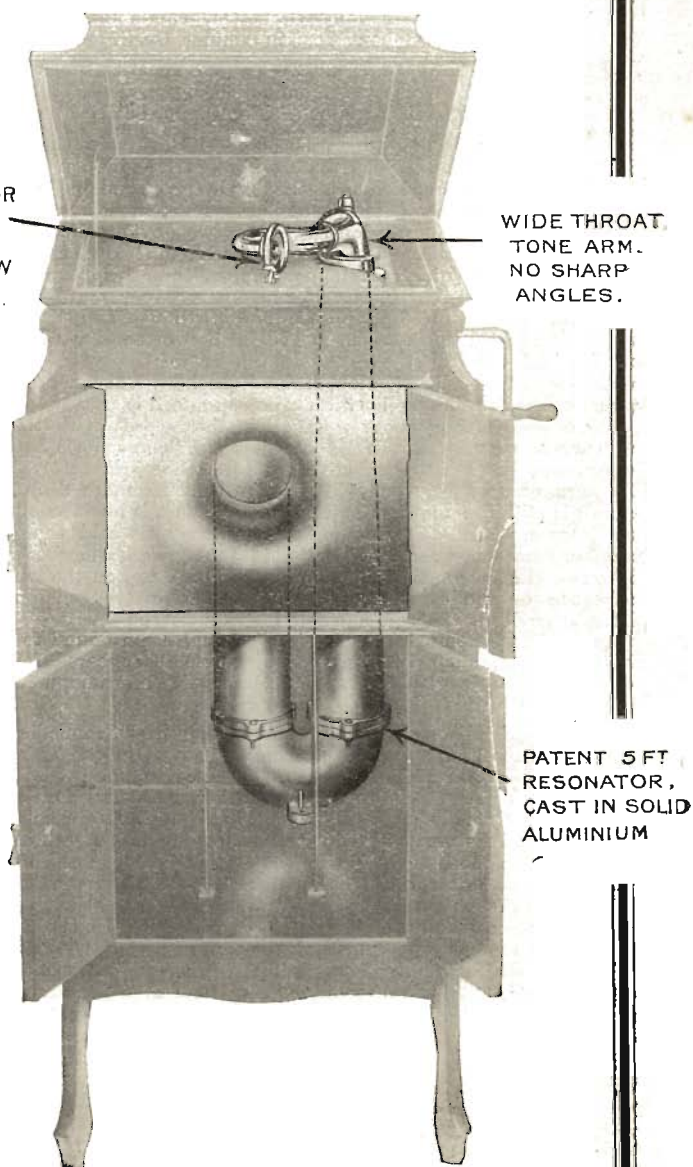
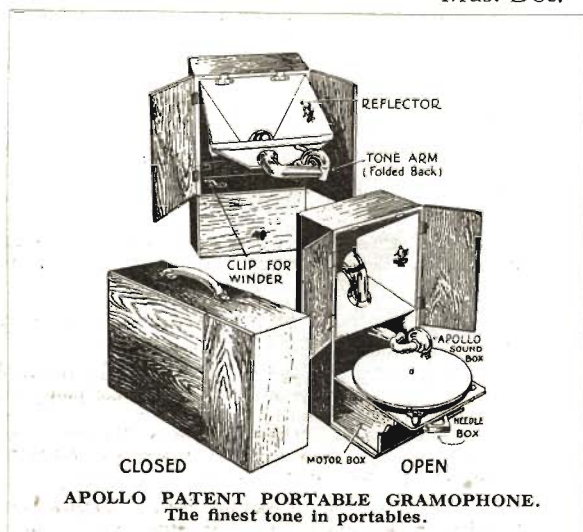
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not had time to hear the Parlophone version again, so I will risk no comparisons. The Columbia rendering is a good and strong one, with just enough "yield" in it to realise the poetry of the music. The recording is excellent; such passages as those for the cellos on pages 37 and 38, for the cellos and double basses in the trio of the *Scherzo*, and for the piccolo near the end of the *finale* are remarkably successful. There is a place on page 109 where an important bass seems to have got rather lost, and at the bottom of page 40 the bass is again slightly blurred, though this is an occasion on which Beethoven seems to have deliberately chosen a clumsy effect. In one respect this version certainly excels the two on which I commented last month. This is in the treatment of the passage leading from the *Scherzo* to the *finale*. At last we have a record in which that vitally significant drum can be heard. It makes rather an odd sound, but at least it is there!

Those who are thinking of investing in records of the *Fifth Symphony* should certainly hear this version before deciding on any of the others. I only regret that there has not been time for me to make a careful comparison myself.

The division of the sides is as follows:—Side 1: To page 10 bar 10 (with the repeat). Side 2: To the end of the first movement. Side 3: To page 41, bar 1. Side 4: To the end of the second movement. Side 5: To page 66, line 2, bar 3. Side 6: To page 83, bar 2. Side 7: To page 106, bar 5. Side 8: To the end.

P. P.

## VOCALION

(June issues.)

A.0234 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—**M. Murray-Davey** (bass), with the Aeolian Orchestra: **Pogner's Address** from Act I., scene 3, *Die Meistersinger* (Wagner), in German, and **Qui sdegno non s'accende** (*Within these sacred bowers*), from *Il Flauto Magico* (Mozart), in Italian.

K.05171 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Malcolm McEachern** (bass): **The Mighty Deep** (W. H. Jude), piano acc. Stanley Chapple, and **From Oberon to Fairyland** (D. D. Slater), with orchestral acc.

K.05172 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Frank Titterton** (tenor), with the Aeolian Orchestra: **Costanza, Costanza** from *Il Seraglio* (Mozart), in Italian, and **Where'er you Walk** from *Semele* (Handel).

X.9570 (10in., 3s.).—**Ethel Hook** (contralto), piano acc. Edith Page: **Ships of my dreams** (T. Wilkinson Stephenson) and **Darby and Joan** (J. L. Molloy).

K.05173 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Adila Fachiri** (violin): **Spanish Dance** (Granados-Kreisler), piano acc. Ivor Newton, and **Sarabande** from *B minor Suite* (Bach), unaccompanied.

K.05174 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Albert Sammons** (violin), **Lionel Tertis** (viola), and **Ethel Hobday** (piano): **Trio No. 7, Op. 16** (Mozart, arr. Tertis), **Third Movement (Allegretto)**, and **Lionel Tertis: Barcarolle** (Tchaikovsky, arr. Tertis), piano acc. Ethel Hobday.

X.9571 (10in., 3s.).—**The Aeolian Orchestra** conducted by Stanley Chapple: **Puck's Minuet** (Herbert Howells), and **Berceuse** (Järnefelt), conducted by Percy Fletcher.

This is the off-season for gramophone records, I suppose, and certainly this rather busy reviewer will be the last man to complain if the Vocalion list is a little shorter than usual this month. The quality of the company's work fully maintains the high level of its recent issues, but I have said enough on this subject in previous numbers of *THE GRAMOPHONE* and will pass at once to a consideration of the individual records.

**Murray-Davey**.—It is a great virtue in Murray-Davey that he does not attempt to sing very loud though he could probably do so without difficulty, as he has a rich bass voice, full and resonant. But his record is marred by a certain monotony. This is due, I think, to two things, a lack of colour in the singing, and an incomplete understanding of rhythm. He can keep time better than most vocalists, but rhythm is much more than keeping time.

**McEachern**.—*The Mighty Deep* is doubtless a good song for a bass who wants to show off his low register. There is one prodigious note (B flat below the bass staff, I made it out to be) which is quite astonishing. But I must confess that *From Oberon to Fairyland* seemed to me much more attractive music. McEachern

has the rhythmic sense that Murray-Davey appears to lack, but he must be careful of his diction. Sometimes it is very good, but he is not consistent.

**Titterton**.—Frank Titterton can be safely relied on for a satisfactory record, even if he seldom produces a great one. This one should appeal, if only for the interest and beauty of the Mozart song. The Handel is probably familiar to most people. In this everything depends on the beauty of the melody and its rendering. Titterton does it substantial justice; purists may grumble at the insertion of extra syllables in one passage, but what can one do when one finds the word "shade" divided into a series of phrases separated by rests? Titterton's diction is good, but even he could hardly have made the sense clear if he had followed the usual distribution of words to tune. Handel, I suspect, cared little in a case of this sort whether the words were heard or not.

**Ethel Hook**.—It is hard to say more of Ethel Hook than that she has a pleasant voice and is quite successful in singing two old-fashioned, sentimental songs in an old-fashioned sentimental way. Not that I have anything against these particular ballads; they are good enough of their kind. But they are too slight and obvious to give one an idea of what the singer could do with more exacting material.

**Adila Fachiri**.—It is a fortunate thing that the Vocalion Company have got Adila Fachiri among their artists, as well as Jelly d'Aranyi. For in truth her playing is little, if at all, inferior to that of her more famous sister. The rendering of the *Spanish Dance* might indeed be that of Jelly d'Aranyi herself, and the difficult Bach is dealt with in a most masterly way, the execution sure and the interpretation thoughtful and convincing.

**Tertis, Sammons, and Hobday**.—I have already sufficiently proclaimed my dislike of arrangements, but what complaint can I make here? Lionel Tertis can produce from his instrument all that richness of tone which we usually associate with the 'cello, without ever letting us forget that it is a viola that he is playing. The result is that his solo to Mrs. Hobday's accompaniment is something unique and delightful. When the party are joined in the Mozart by Albert Sammons one feels that here are three artists in perfect sympathy, each of them worthy of the others. But I wish the piano was a little louder in this dainty and joyous trifle. When it has the tune—which happens frequently—it is almost swamped by the string accompaniment, though this should properly be no more than a discreet murmur of approval. The recording experts might look into this matter.

**Aeolian Orchestra**.—Järnefelt's *Berceuse* is quite an agreeable little piece, but for me it was completely eclipsed by the very individual *Minuet* of Howells. The composer has most successfully achieved a genuine "Puckish" atmosphere and the piquancy of the orchestration is most admirably reproduced in the record. Of all the Vocalion issues this month it is this and the Tertis record that I should buy first.

P. P.

## PARLOPHONE

(July Issues.)

E.10332 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Emmy Bettendorf** (soprano) and **Lauritz Melchior** (tenor): **Duet** from Act 2, Scene 2, of *Tannhäuser* (Wagner).

E.10333 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Irmiler Madrigal Choir**: **Ave Maria** (Schubert) and **Litanei** (Schubert).

E.10323 and 10324 (12in., 4s. 6d. each).—**Opera House Orchestra** conducted by Siegfried Wagner: **Siegfried Idyll** (Wagner).

E.10325 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Opera House Orchestra**, conducted by Dr. Weissmann: **Dance of the Arabs** and **Abduction of the Bride** (*Second Peer Gynt Suite*) (Grieg).

E.10326 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Opera House Orchestra**: **Stormy Evening on the Coast** (*Peer Gynt Suite II.*) and **In the Hall of the Mountain King** and **Solveig's Song** (*Suite I.*) (Grieg).

E.10328 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Edith Lorand Orchestra**: **Reminiscences of Sorrento** (Di Curtis) and **Lago di Como** (Fanchey).

E.10327 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Edith Lorand Orchestra**: **Chanson d'Amour** (Kaskel) and **Melody** (Charles G. Dawes).



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E.10331 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Mairecker-Buchsbaum Quartet : Scherzo from the Death and the Maiden Quartet in D minor (Schubert) and Andante from Quartet in D minor (Haydn).**

Miss Bettendorf sings more delicately than her partner, whose very big voice is not readily or gracefully damped down. He is happiest (though we are not, always) when he is letting it go. He sings clearly, with a good amount of emotion of an honest kind. The soprano music has a chaste suavity that is coolingly refreshing. Note for instance, the curves of the melody in Elizabeth's solo portion (second half of the first side). Italian grace here influences the composer's pen. Note, too, near the beginning, his use of the favourite device of the turn—an ornament which he frequently employs in his early music.

The Irmeler Choir gives us two more arrangements, done with all delicacy. The *Litany* has a lovely melodic line, and the lower parts are thoughtfully treated. The other piece has a solo verse, the chorus entering later. I hope this excellent choir will not neglect original works for female voices. Arrangements of favourite tunes are acceptable, but there are plenty of fine things written for the women's choir, and these we hope to hear in considerable numbers.

The *Siegfried Idyll* was fully annotated by my colleague, P. P., on page 34 of the June issue. He made some comparisons between the various records (nearly every company has done the work), and all I need add is that this Parlophone performance does not impress me so much as have others. I do not feel that the mind is moved as Wagner suggested it might be by this music—as “a noble forest on a summer evening” moves “the lonely visitor who has left behind the noise of the city.” He felt it as “a silence growing more and more alive.” While the present records have some good points of suavity and serenity, the music is taken rather too fast, and there is not quite the tonal resource that one expects—on the second side, for instance. A certain heaviness—a thickness which the texture of the music does not actually present—seems to be present. It sounds, to put the impression in a word, pedestrian. The grown Siegfried who conducts was the little Siegfried who was giving such delight to Wagner and his wife when the music was written. He does not seem to have been inspired in conducting the music. Listen, for instance, to the start of Side 3—the repeated figure of three beats. He makes a good end, though the highest notes of the strings are not of very telling quality. The balance is in general quite good, but the beautiful counterpoint does not quite get through. (This piece is a treasure for any student of the science of part-writing, by the way—a means of learning without tears, unless they be tears at the thought of the difficulty of producing work so fine. But then, Wagner was a genius whose like we shall not see again.)

The second *Peer Gynt Suite* is not so often heard as the first, but it contains music just as charming. Of course, these are only brightly-coloured pictures from a portfolio. They have little or nothing to do with the spirit of Ibsen, but they are good stage music, that goes exceedingly well with the drama, as those who remember the performance in full at the “Old Vic,” or one of the very infrequent representations outside London, will agree. You need not accept Grieg's Easternism as realistic. It is piquant, and that is all we ask. His *Arab Dance* may interestingly be compared with Tchaikovsky's in the well-known *Nutcracker Suite*. The little *Storm* is a brisk affair, in a tea-cup, as regards length, but original and full of good pelting rain—the sort of thing on hearing which one puts up the coat-collar. The playing in the *Mountain King* piece is rather shrill, and not well balanced.

There are other reminiscences than those of Sorrento in the piece on E.10328. That is to say, this is the kind of highly unoriginal music that hundreds of little composers, rattling their small change, for ever turning it over at the full moon, hoping for new ideas, are churning out every day. It is harmless enough, and all right in the distance, of a summer evening in Paris, when (if you are not very sophisticated) you like to feel you are inbreathing the atmosphere of the gay life that is not too indecorous. The Lorand Orchestra is a very capable little body, that might give us some of the smaller things of better composers. It could do them distinctly well, if an eye (or ear) were kept on refinement of tone in a forte.

The quartet *Scherzo* is vigorous, but we are never vouchsafed a real piano tone, not to speak of a pianissimo. Body and blend are praiseworthy, but the lower strings are a bit rough, and refinement is needed. The slow movement is given in better style.

K. K.

## COLUMBIA

(July Issues.)

3566 (10in., 3s.).—**Arthur Jordan (tenor) : Sea Chanties—Away for Rio and Shenandoah** (arr. Clive Carey).

3659 (10in., 3s.).—**Cathedral Octet : All people that on earth do dwell and For all the saints** (Vaughan Williams).

3660 (10in., 3s.).—**William Heseltine : Love went a-riding** (F. Bridge) and **O sleep, why dost thou leave me ?** from *Semele* (Handel).

3661 (10in., 3s.).—**Topliss Green : Coming home** (Willeby) and **The old Shepherd's song** (Fisher).

X.318 (10in., 6s.).—**Elsa Stralia : Sometimes in my dreams and Because** (d'Hardelot).

X.322 (10in., 6s.).—**Riccardo Stracciari (baritone) : Zaza piccolo zingara and Buono Zaza** from *Zaza* (Leoncavallo).

L.1644 and 1645 (12in., 7s. 6d. each).—**L. Tertis : Chaconne** (originally for violin solo), arranged by Tertis for viola (Bach).

Mr. Jordan's open tone is quite well suited to the first chanty. The second might have been treated a little more quietly. His style is plain and straightforward (bating a touch of the sentimental in *Shenandoah*), and his words can always be made out.

The Cathedral Octet does not impress. The tone is not well balanced, and wobbling voices ought not to be found in such a body. The accompaniment is not well tempered with the voices, and needs much more “bottom.” The *faux bourdon* effect would be well enough if the tone had any attraction. At least one of the sopranos does not always get in the middle of the notes.

Mr. Heseltine's *Love* rides his Pegasus as 'twere any cab-nag—mighty soberly. He sings at the top of his voice, and holds long notes unsteadily, and scoops at the end, and altogether tries the ear very much indeed. With better control he makes more of the Handel air—a particularly lovely specimen, and gains my applause for a good *sostenuto* in the long slow run, finely expressive, on the word “wandering”—a run that suggests the vagrancy of love, in its windings. The tone becomes rather closed and backward at the end. I think Mr. Heseltine should use all more gently. There is good basic tone here, if it is properly cultivated.

Mr. Green is too good an artist to be spending his time on things like *Coming home*. The song by the way, is not by three people, as the label suggests. The name of the writer of the words is, I believe, hyphenated—Eardley-Wilmot. As a matter of fact, this singer does not give either song the “punch” that would be handed out by a performer of less brain power. For sentimentals, brains (above a certain modest level) are positively an encumbrance. Let all things be suited, say I. Let the idly-minded sing the songs of idle people—idle in the sense that they are content to raise a cheerful tinkle for the satisfying of the easy emotions of other lazy folk. But let a man with some stuffing in him sing songs of real artistic merit—and no others. “Evil communications . . .” There is an example of that in the next record. Here is Miss Stralia playing about among the childish things of balladom. Does she wish to be judged, as an artist, on these trivialities? No musician can fully respect a singer, however vocally gifted, who betrays her art so. Down goes a black mark against her; and in the present instance, two, because she sings so badly—with a hard edge to the voice, making breaks here and there, exaggerating. Singing the things as they deserve? Yes, but not thus does Miss Stralia's talent—or the public—deserve to be treated.

Leoncavallo is a one-work man. He probably had only *Pagliacci* in his head, and, having delivered it, could no more. This is tawdry stuff that the loud and wavering Stracciari sings—coarse music, coarsely sung; music bulging over, like an obese, overfed woman; music from which anyone of average sensitiveness shrinks instinctively.

There are some patent advantages in the transference of the *Chaconne* from violin to viola. There is a more robust bass, and the chords are of fuller volume. The loss in variety of tone is thus made up, we may say. But one rather misses the lighter upper register of the violin. The work, considered as a piece of closely knit, finely poised music, based upon its broad foundation, soaring, yet never losing touch with that, engages our admiration the more we know of it. We are always glad to hear Tertis employing his remarkable art upon any music whatever; but many of us would like to hear him more frequently in works written for his instrument. It is a tribute to his sensitive musicianship to say that his arrangements are extraordinarily good. If these are published, the repertory of the violist will be sensibly and splendidly enlarged.

K. K.



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THE Gramophone as a means of spreading education and the fostering of the love of music has long since become an indispensable factor in modern life. The Gramophone has become part and parcel of the home and no house can be said to be complete without one. The output of records of the various Gramophone Companies continues to increase by leaps and bounds; the days of recording only the mere drawing-room piece or sentimental ballad are long past, and enterprising concerns have extended their operations to large Orchestral works and classical Chamber-music. The amount of good done in this direction cannot be estimated too highly, for countless inhabitants of town and country can now enjoy the pleasure of listening, by means of the Gramophone, to the greatest music given by the best performers.

More than all the other Arts, music demands a certain amount of schooling if it is to serve as the construction of a serious artistic purpose as well as a form of amusement. Without some preparation it is impossible to obtain real pleasure or derive the highest amount of enjoyment. In learning to listen to music certain practice is necessary, and some acquaintance with technical theory desirable. But even thus equipped listeners to the Gramophone, like concert-goers, will find some difficulty in following even a comparatively simple work with complete understanding. Musicians and the best critics themselves generally prefer to have the printed notes to study as a help either before or at a performance of an unknown work. The Gramophone listener will feel the want of the orchestral score. Full scores are bulky and expensive and this is where Pocket Editions are of value, and they have acted for years as guides and assistants to music-lovers in general. The attention of all who possess a gramophone (and also let us not forget the wireless) is therefore drawn to the *Edition of Miniature Scores* published by the Leipzig firm, *Ernst Eulenburg*, the original and most widely developed undertaking of its kind.

The sole distributing agents for this Edition in the British Empire are *Messrs. Goodwin & Tabb* (1924) Ltd., of 34, Percy Street, London, W. 1.

The complete catalogue comprises about 700 works of classical and modern music, Orchestral, Chamber, Choral, and Operatic. No classical or modern composition of note is omitted. The list of the more modern German composers of Chamber music includes the following names:—Klose, Klughardt, Arnold, Mendelssohn, Pfitzner, Reger, Reuss, Schönberg, Straesser, and Hugo Wolf; amongst others—Dvorák, Franck, Grieg, Saint-Saëns, Sgambati, Sibelius, Sinding, Smetana, Tchaikovsky, and Verdi. The output of the following masters is to be had in orchestral score:—Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Bruckner, Handel, Haydn, Humperdinck, Liszt, Mahler, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Pfitzner, Reger, Schubert, Schumann, Spohr, Joh. Strauss, Rich. Strauss, Wagner, Weber, Weingartner, Wolf, etc.; also of—Auber, Bizet, Cherubini, Dvorák, Glazounov, Glinka, Grieg, Lalo, Moussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rossini, Scriabin, Smetana, Tchaikovsky, etc.

This imposing gallery of names will prove the comprehensiveness of the *Eulenburg Edition of Miniature Scores*.

It is to be noted also that an important collection of complete choral works and operas can be obtained (*Fidelio*, *Freischütz*, *Magic Flute*, *Wagner*, etc.), and that an *Edition de Luxe* of standard works is published in solid linen or half-leather bound volumes. The fact that the Edition is gradually providing the more important works with a short and well-written introduction, will appeal to amateur and professional alike. This introduction is the work of writers of standing and authority and is printed in German and English. It gives the reader an idea of the history, form, style and contents of the composition and points out its most salient features.

Attention is drawn to the complete and supplementary catalogues of the Edition which *Messrs. Goodwin & Tabb* (1924) Ltd. will be only too pleased to forward on request.

This will be continued next month and will deal with Chamber Music, giving hints and much useful information to guide students as to how a score should be read.

ADVT.



## HIS MASTER'S VOICE

(July Issues.)

- D.B.830 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Toti dal Monte (soprano) with orch. acc.: *Una voce poco fa* from Act 1, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Rossini), and *Caro Nome* from Act 1, *Rigoletto* (Verdi).
- D.A.579 (10in., 6s.).—Maria Jeritza (soprano) with orch. acc.: *Son gente risoluta* and *Dio di giustizia* from *Fedora* (Giordano).
- D.B.814 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Frieda Hempel with orch. acc. and flute obb. by John Amadio: *Should he upbraid* (Bishop) and *Birdling, why sing in the forest wild* (Taubert).
- D.B.849 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Dinh Gilly (baritone) with orch. acc.: *A word allow me, Prologue, Part 1*, and *A song of tender memories, Prologue, Part 2*, from *Pagliacci* (Leoncavallo).
- D.B.872 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Erika Morini (violin) with piano acc.: *Capriccio Valse, Op. 7* and *Second Concerto in D minor, Op. 22, Romance* (Wieniawski).
- D.B.838 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Jascha Heifetz (violin) with piano acc.: *Hebrew Dance* (Joseph Achron) and *Habanera* (Spanish Dance) (Sarasate).
- D.B.837 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—Flonzaley String Quartet: *Quartet in C major, Op. 77, No. 1, First Movement, Allegro moderato*, and *Third Movement, Menuette* (Haydn).
- D.1000 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Landon Ronald: *Fêtes* (No. 2 of *Three Nocturnes*) *Parts 1 and 2* (Debussy).
- E.389 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Tudor Davies (tenor) with orch. acc.: *The Hour* (P. Kahn) and *Strange harmony of contrast* (*Recondita armonia*) from *Tosca* (Puccini).
- E.388 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Robert Radford (bass): *Mephistopheles' Serenade* (On this lute, I sing a serenade) from *The Damnation of Faust* (Berlioz) with piano acc. and *In sheltered vale* (arr. F. D'Alquer) with orch. acc.
- E.390 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—Carmen Hill (mezzo-soprano) with piano acc.: *When I think of the happy days* (D. Forster) and *Golden Days* (Sullivan).
- D.1001 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Mark Hambourg (pianoforte): *Sonatine Parts 1 and 2* (Ravel).
- D.997, D.998, and D.999 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—Catterall String Quartet: *Quartet in G major, Op. 18, No. 2, Allegro, Parts 1 and 2, Adagio cantabile, Scherzo and Allegro molto quasi presto, Parts 1 and 2* (Beethoven).
- B.2026 (10in., 3s.).—Marjorie Hayward (violin) with piano acc.: *Tambourin in D* (Leclair) and *Viennese melody* (Gartner-Kreisler).
- D.1002 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—Eva Plaschke von der Osten (Soprano) and Minnie Nast (Soprano) with orch. acc.: *Hit ihren Augen voll from Act 2 and Ist ein Traum, kann nicht from Act 3 of Der Rosenkavalier* (Richard Strauss).
- C.1202 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Neues Tonkünstler Orchestra: *Der Rosenkavalier, Waltz, Parts 1 and 2* (Richard Strauss).
- B.2041 (10in., 3s.).—Trinity Choir (mixed voices): *Prayer of Thanksgiving* (folk song of the Netherlands) (arr. E. Kreuser) unaccompanied and *Hark, hark my soul* (Dykes) with piano acc.

Toti dal Monte has produced a record quite free from any suspicion of blast, but her rendering of *Una voce* is a thought too careful and the interpolations are not so effective as those on the Galli-Curci record, which is easily the best of this aria.

*Fedora* is to be heard this season at Covent Garden, so it seems best to reserve one's opinion of these arias until their dramatic purpose is made clear. Detached, they are not very striking, being Pucciniesque without his individual touch. So far as recording goes Mme. Jeritza has at last made the record we expected of her; good full tone and fine phrasing. Hempel also avoids any shrillness or over-straining in her smooth singing of Bishop's charming song and the platitudinous warblings of Taubert's imagination; a greater libel on "birdlings" than any Epstein has perpetrated.

The orchestral accompaniment to the *Prologue* is splendidly done, being well to the fore instead of, as in many records of the aria, suffering eclipse. Gilly sings in English, rather inexplicably, but his voice rings out finely and his interpretation is admirable.

Erika Morini, a newcomer, has given me intense pleasure by her playing of Wieniawski's *Romance*, a piece of music written by a violinist and therefore exploiting all the effective resources of the instrument. Generally speaking, women players lack precisely those qualities in interpretation that one might expect of them, tenderness and delicacy, which the opposite sex are much more successful in getting into their music. This is very noticeable at students' concerts; girls almost without exception smash and bang, whereas men, when they succeed in rising above the technical side of their art, manage to humanise their interpretations more than the others. However, in this case, Mme. Morini's playing is most sensitive and tender, a real joy. Even in the fireworks on the reverse, which show us a fine technique, she does not lose her artistic sensibility. A special tribute must be paid to the beautifully played and recorded piano part.

Heifetz' record is hard and brilliant, but not nearly so pleasing. The music of the *Hebrew Dance* brings to my mind David dancing furiously before the Lord!

The Flonzaley Quartet record of two movements from Haydn's *Quartet in G major, Op. 77, No. 1* is one you cannot possibly pass over. The first movement is the very incarnation of the composer's sweet and happy nature and one has only to deplore a cut of 41 bars. The *Scherzo* is very broadly conceived and has a most charming trio with a cuckoo-like refrain following upon the resolute tramping of the opening bars. The music is played with a marvellous sense of rhythm and even the very high first violin notes in the *Scherzo* have been caught with beautiful precision by the recording apparatus. Altogether a disc to treasure.

Debussy's *Three Nocturnes* (*Nuages-Fêtes-Sirènes*), composed in 1899, were played by the Queen's Hall Orchestra with the composer conducting at a concert of his works in February, 1909. *Fêtes* was encored, together with the *Prelude a l'après midi d'un faune*. It is a most attractively scored work and has recorded exceptionally well—as anyone might have prophesied—but, as is so often the case in Debussy's music, the composer is apt to repeat one rhythmic figure *ad nauseam*: a trick he probably learnt from the Russians. The gradual crescendo to a climax that the march reaches comes out finely. There are many delightful touches of colour, such as those afforded by the harps and drums and the muted trumpets. The title of the movement sufficiently indicates its programme, which may be supplemented by individual fancy.

*Strange harmony of contrast* is a painful and inharmonious contrast to *Recondita armonia*. The phrase cannot be satisfactorily Englished. Tudor Davies has the ideal Puccini voice; that is, a voice of the true lyric quality in which the German tenors of the present opera season have been so conspicuously lacking. The Kahn song is what one would expect from a good accompanist with no creative talent, and both sides are well sung and recorded.

Berlioz' setting of *Mephistopheles' Serenade* also suffers in an English version, for one seems to need the snap of the French words. Nor does Mr. Radford quite catch the sardonic quality of voice that made Plançon's rendering of the aria so notable. *In sheltered vale* is the kind of folk song that would be depressing at a funeral. One is not accustomed to Radford in the dumps.

Carmen Hill's art is not sufficiently appreciated by gramophiles. I have been trying over many of her recordings and find them nearly all of high excellence. The record under review of two retrospective songs of gentle sentimentality is really admirable singing and should meet with due recognition. Miss Hill should be singing only good English songs and *lieder*, were the demand for such fare what it ought to be.

Mark Hambourg has not got quite the delicacy necessary to make a first-rate record of Ravel's sub-acid little sonata and there are a few wrong notes that show up where a clear outline is essential. The delicious little minuet is the *bonne-bouche* of this very happy creation of Ravel's and Mr. Hambourg is to be congratulated on pursuing his policy of going off the beaten track of piano pieces.

The Catterall Quartet's complete version of Beethoven's *Quartet in G major, Op. 18, No. 2*, hitherto available only in a mutilated form, is a welcome addition to the ever-growing list of the composer's chamber music. Not only is the quartet singularly happy and care-free throughout with one of the most light-hearted *scherzos* Beethoven ever wrote, but the Catterall Quartet have never yet made such a consistently excellent recording. "Though



the voice is that of Beethoven the idiom is still more or less that of the eighteenth century" is a reflection that will occur to everyone at the opening bars; but the music soon begins to exhibit the development devices characteristic of the composer. The *Tristan und Isolde* like *coda* to the first movement, coming after such light-hearted merriment, is very striking and deserves special attention.

The first theme of the slow movement is very highly decorated until an *allegro* bursts out of the little figure of its closing bars. The 'cello should have been given more prominence at the recapitulation. Again, a note of gravity creeps in at the end. I have already spoken of the *Scherzo*. The last movement founded on a very jolly tune, contains some abrupt, but exceedingly effective modulations and the *coda* is uproariously merry.

Marjorie Hayward contributes a very pleasing record, though perhaps the continuous double-stopping in the *Viennese Melody* grows a little wearisome; the tune of the latter is a lovely one, very sympathetically played.

An unfortunate lapse in intonation on the part of the soprano on the final high note robs the recording of the lovely duet from *Der Rosenkavalier* of some of its joy. Previous to that her singing and that of Eva von der Osten, who sang the part of Octavian at the first performance over here, is all that could be desired. The violin pizzicatos drown the celesta in the *Rose* theme and are far too strenuous. These are, I believe, all old recordings, so they cannot be judged by modern standards. The duet from Act 2 is rather confused sounding and the orchestral opening has none of the requisite richness.

On the whole, the record of the *Waltz* is quite a success; certainly so far as the strings are concerned. The wood-wind, in the minuet, lack clarity, but the second side makes amends and possesses the rhythmic swing that is the life blood of this music.

A choral record comes at the end of this long list, which has a greater clarity of detail and a larger tone than any I have yet heard. The effect in a large room is magnificent in spite of the poorish quality of the music.

I find that I omitted to notice the Gerhardt record (D.A.706, 10in., 6s.) in the June bulletin, which contains Schubert's *Wohin* and *Das Lied im Grünen*. The former (of which the words and a translation will be found in Vol. I., supplement to December, 1923) is most beautifully sung and gives exactly the feeling of the rippling brook by which the young miller is being led to his beloved. Too much tone and the effect is gone, but this breathless staccato singing is just right. One might suppose that Mme. Gerhardt had chosen *Das Lied im Grünen* because of the lovely quality she gives to the vowel sound in the last word, were she not far too great an artist to be influenced by such a consideration. Her interpretation with its matchless diction completes a record of singular appeal. We shall eagerly await further issues in which, we beg, may be some examples of the supreme art of Hugo Wolf.

N. P.

### SONGS FROM THE WEEK-END BOOK.

John Goss (baritone) with male quartet and pianoforte accompaniment played by Hubert J. Foss. 10in., 3s. each.

### HIS MASTER'S VOICE

B.1999.—*Shenandoah* with (a) *Rio Grande* and (b) *Billy Boy*. Sea shanties arranged by R. R. Terry.

B.2016.—(a) *Hey Ho, to the Greenwood* (William Byrd), (b) *Lillibulero* (Old English song), with *Aye Waukin' Oh* (Scottish song), arranged W. Augustus Barrett.

B.2017.—(a) *O good ale, thou art my darling* (Old English song), arranged Peter Warlock; (b) *Sinner, please doan let this harvest pass* (Negro Spiritual), arranged H. T. Burleigh, with *O sweet fa's the eve* (Norwegian folk tune), arranged E. J. Moeran.

B.2018.—(a) *And when I die*; (b) *The last long mile* (Army marching songs), arranged Hubert J. Foss, with (a) *Can't you dance the polka?* (sea shanty), arranged E. J. Moeran; (b) *A-Roving* (sea shanty), arranged Cecil J. Sharp.

Those who have followed the steady rise of John Goss to the front rank of singers of artistic merit, incapable of singing anything they do not believe in for commercial gain, will welcome his

appearance on this special H.M.V. supplement. They and others, to whom his name is unfamiliar, will doubtless hail with joy a delightful selection of songs culled from that whimsical production of the Nonesuch Press, the "Week-End" book. I urge you to purchase a copy at once; you will not regret it. In the book will be found, amongst many delights, the words and music of all the songs sung on these records, so that you and your friends can, if so minded, join in the choruses with complete abandon during your brief week-ends.

Sea-shanties! What music in the very word; what regrets that the passing of the sailing ship sounded the death-knell of these true sailor-songs. Nothing can rob us of these immortal tunes and words or the memories imagination, feeding on the sea stories of Herman Melville and his companions, may conjure up.

As Sir Richard Terry points out in his introduction to the Shanty Book (Part I) (Curwen), the sailors of the Merchant Service never sang the shanties as a recreation, but only at labour. In common with so many folk songs these were devised to help men at their work, and "a good shanty-man with a pretty wit was worth his weight in gold. He was a privileged person, and was excused all work save light or odd jobs." I was showing a sailor a publication called "The Sea, its History and Romance" the other day. "Damned little romance" was his comment! Only he didn't say "damned"! The romance indeed of these songs, their Rabelaisian words carefully doctored, is more apparent to us landlubbers safe in our warm houses than to these hard-bitten seamen. Well, let us abandon ourselves to it as we listen to one of the most famous of shanties, *Shenandoah*, a tune as lovely in its way as the *Londonderry Air*, full of the wind and waves. The rollicking *Rio Grande* will sweep everyone off his feet. *Billy boy* is really a landsman's song that has found its way on board ship, being altered in the process (see Vaughan Williams' *My boy Billie*). *Can't you dance the Polka* with its American flavour and *A-Roving* complete a series that does the ear good to hear and warms the cockles of the heart. Just think of one of the modern-day shop-balls beside this salty stuff!

An atmosphere of the tavern breathes out of *Hey ho, to the Greenwood*, a canon for three voices by Byrd. Dean Inge should play it at breakfast every morning; a sovereign cure for his odd views about the "Middle Ages."

An interesting history attaches to the song on the reverse, *Lillibulero*, part of which I will quote from the bulletin. "It contributed not a little to the great revolution of 1688; elsewhere it is referred to as the song which sung a deluded prince (James II.) out of three kingdoms." It seems, however, very doubtful that Purcell was the composer of the tune as stated in the bulletin; Grove has a long article on the subject.

*And when I die* will be of more than ordinary interest to ex-soldiers, many of whom it will carry back, as only a tune or a scent can in the evocation of memories, to the Great War. It is precisely the kind of improvised thing that becomes a "folk song" and in years to come the antiquarian will be excited to find that our soldiers invented, after a considerable lapse of such creative effort, a well-contrived song in two parts, imitative in nature. What a wagging of heads there will be! Here are the pathetic words:

And when I die, don't bury me at all,  
Just pickle my bones in alcohol;  
Put a bottle of booze at my head and feet,  
And then I know my bones will keep.

I have only space to draw brief attention to the remaining songs, of which the delicately beautiful setting by Mr. Moeran of *O sweet fa's the eve* and the Scottish labour song *Aye waukin' oh* deserve special notice. The labour has no connection with the Clyde or Mr. Wheatley's activities, for "Waukin' songs of various types are used (in the Hebrides) in the course of shrinking one and the same web of cloth. Beginning with a moderately slow tempo they become ever more fast and furious. When the shrinking process is complete, the web is rolled up and clapped to a lively song." This impression is not conveyed by Barrett's arrangement of such an air, used here.

Mr. Goss, with a male quartet drawn, I believe, from Westminster Cathedral Choir, performs his very varied task in a wholly admirable manner, with unflagging zest and artistry. His voice, as I had suspected, records very well, but it is his sense of rhythm and phrasing, in a word his musicianship, which distinguishes these delightful discs. Musicianly, too, is the adjective for the part played by the male quartet and the accompanist.

N. P.



## BRUNSWICK

(June issues.)

- 50053 (12in., 8s.).—**Cleveland Orchestra** conducted by **Nikolai Sokoloff**: *Symphony No. 2, Allegretto, Third Movement* (Brahms) and *Finlandia, Op. 26, No. 7* (Sibelius).
- 10152 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Florence Easton**: *Old Folks at Home (Swanee River)* (Forster) and *Hard times to come again no more* (Forster).
- 10159 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—**Elshuco Trio**: *Elegia, Op. 32, Arensky*, and *Scherzo, Op. 8* (Brahms).
- 20038 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—**Vesella's Italian Band**: *Forza del Destino (Solenne in quest'ora), Act 3* (Verdi), and *Mefistofele Selection* (Boito).
- 2771 (10in., 3s.).—**Fredric Fradkin**: *Colorado* (Hirsch-Dellon) and *In a little rendezvous* (Lewis-Young-Snyder).

*Cleveland Orchestra*.—*Finlandia*, with its very full scoring, must be a troublesome work to record, and the Brunswick Company must have the credit of a notable triumph over difficulties. The recording, too, is spirited and effective. The "cuts" are regrettable, but (I suppose) unavoidable on a single record version. The Brahms' movement on the other side is uncut and wholly delightful, a sort of minuet with two different trios. The mood is slightly akin to that of some of his *Hungarian Dances*, but the treatment is more complete. The price of the record is high, but those whose purses are long enough will find that this piece "well repays the trouble and expense."

*Florence Easton*.—Here are two songs that were both very familiar about forty years ago. I will not criticise them as their appeal is not so much musical as sentimental. The singing, however, is within my province, and I did not find it entirely satisfactory. The singer shows a pronounced tendency to drag and an annoying habit of starting anywhere near the note and only gradually arriving at it. But her diction is fairly good. By the way, with reference to *Old Folks at Home*, what has Dvorák's unfortunate *Humoresque* done that it should be dragged in as accomplice and accessory before and after the fact?

*Elshuco Trio*.—The *Elegia* is the slow movement of Arensky's popular work in D minor, and consists of music that is distinctly attractive though not particularly original. The recording is good, the balance being far better than we usually find in piano trios, but the movement is most drastically cut. The *Scherzo* from Brahms' early work in B has also suffered severely from the blue pencil, and here the balance is not quite so good. Some of the high notes on the violin are rather shrill, too. The music is strong, virile stuff, remotely reminiscent once or twice of some of Beethoven's symphonic scherzos. At 3s. this record would be well worth while, but at 4s. 6d. it seems a more doubtful proposition.

*Vesella's Italian Band*.—Perhaps the band expert will find virtues here that my degenerate orchestral ear has missed. The music seemed banal to me. Possibly in the original version of the Verdi a great voice might save the situation, but I find myself entirely out of sympathy with the present arrangement.

*Fradkin*.—*Colorado* is the sort of music that the gramophonist probably associates with De Groot. The playing here is similar in style to that of the Piccadilly Orchestra, but not quite so good, in my opinion. *In a little rendezvous*, in spite of its *cadenzas*, belongs to the same musical genre.

The recording of all these records is distinctly good, and I think the Brunswick surface is improving. They are so successful when they attempt good and complicated music that one wishes they were a little bit more ambitious. P. P.

## THE GRAMOPHONE CONGRESS

Central Hall, Westminster

THURSDAY, JULY 9th

10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

TICKETS (1/-, including tax) may be obtained at the door, or in advance from *The Gramophone*, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.

READ THE PARTICULARS ON PAGE 79.

## Miscellaneous Reviews

ACO.—F.33074 (12in., 4s.).—**John Thorne** (baritone): *O Star of Eve* from *Tannhäuser* (Wagner) and *The King in Thule* (Liszt).

H.M.V.—C.1197 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Mayfair Orchestra**: *Rose Marie Selection* (Friml and Stothart).

H.M.V.—C.1198 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Sydney Coltham** (tenor): *Rose Marie*, and **Kathlyn Hilliard** (soprano): *Indian Love Call* from *Rose Marie* (Friml).

H.M.V.—B.1993 (10in., 3s.).—**Salon Orchestra**: *Indian Love Call* from *Rose Marie* (Friml) and *The World is waiting for the sunrise* (Seitz).

H.M.V.—B.1994 (10in., 3s.).—**Savoy Orpheans**: *It ain't gonna rain no mo' Fantasie* (Wendell Hall, arr. D. Somers).

H.M.V.—B.2005 (10in., 3s.).—**Jack Buchanan and June**: *Garden of Lies* (P. Braham) and *This year, next year* (Max Darewski).

H.M.V.—B.2011 (10in., 3s.).—**Irene Bordoni** (comédienne): *I won't say I will* and *So this is love* from *Little Miss Bluebeard*.

H.M.V.—B.1995 (10in., 3s.).—**Cyril Newton** (baritone): *The only, only one for me* (Green, Monaco, and Warren) and *Shanghai* (H. Nicholls).

H.M.V.—B.2006 (10in., 3s.).—**Aileen Stanley** (comédienne): *When my sugar walks down the street* (Austin, McHugh, and Mills) and *I ain't got nobody to love* (Coslow and Silver).

H.M.V.—B.2015 (10in., 3s.).—**Aileen Stanley** (comédienne): *You're in wrong with the right baby* (M. Pinkard) and *My best girl* (W. Donaldson).

H.M.V.—B.2020 (10in., 3s.).—**De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra**: *Storyland* (E. Bartnett) and *Farewell, my love, farewell* (Frasquita, Lehar).

H.M.V.—B.2008 (10in., 3s.).—**Jesse Crawford** (pipe organ solo): *Rose Marie* (R. Friml) and *Dreams that never come true* (Gillispie, Kauter, and Crawford).

COLUMBIA.—9037 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Drury Lane Theatre Orchestra**: *Rose Marie* (Friml), *Selection, Parts 1 and 2*

COLUMBIA.—9038 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Edith Day and Derek Oldham** with **Drury Lane Theatre Orchestra**: *Indian Love Call* (*Rose Marie*, Friml) and *Derek Oldham* (tenor): *Rose Marie*, conducted by Hermann Finck.

COLUMBIA.—3638 (10in., 3s.).—**Edith Day** (soprano) with **Drury Lane Orchestra**: *The Minuet of the Minute* and *Pretty Things* (*Rose Marie*).

COLUMBIA.—3639 (10in., 3s.).—**John Dunsmure and Chorus**: *The Mounties*, and **Edith Day**: *Door of my Dreams* (*Rose Marie*).

COLUMBIA.—3640 (10in., 3s.).—**Clarice Hardwicke and Billy Merson**: *Why shouldn't we?* and **Billy Merson**: *Hard-boiled Herman* (*Rose Marie*).

COLUMBIA.—3649 (10in., 3s.).—**Cyril Newton** (baritone): *Bye-bye Baby* (Motzan and Bloom) and *Back to Colorado* (Newton, Milne and Silver).

COLUMBIA.—3650 (10in., 3s.).—**Cyril Newton**: *No one knows what it's all about* (Ross and Woods) and *Me and the boy friend* (Clare and Monaco).

COLUMBIA.—3646 (10in., 3s.).—**Ella Shields**: *Show me the way to go home* (Irving King) and *All the nice girls are in the ballroom* (B. Scott).

COLUMBIA.—3644 (10in., 3s.).—**John Payne** (baritone), Laurence Brown at the piano: *My Lord, what a morning* and *My way is cloudy* (Negro Spirituals).

COLUMBIA.—3643 (10in., 3s.).—**J. H. Squire's Celeste Octet**: *Valse Bleue* (Margis) and *Amoureuse* (Berger).



**COLUMBIA.**—3647 (10in., 3s.).—Norah Blaney and Gwen Farrar: *Cousin Clara's crazy over crosswords* (Lew and Long). Norah Blaney: *Honest and truly*. 'Cello obbligato by Gwen Farrar (Fred Ross).

**COLUMBIA.**—3648 (10in., 3s.).—Norah Blaney and Gwen Farrar. *I (we) don't want to get married*. Norah Blaney: *Come Back* 'Cello obbligato by Gwen Farrar (Fisher and de Ranza).

John Thorne takes the recitative of *Star of Eve* rather heavily, and the aria lacks line. *The King in Thule* suits his voice better. His diction is excellent.

There is little to choose between the *Rose Marie* selections. They are all different arrangements, and it is a question of which you prefer, as the recording is in every case first-rate. Derek Oldham is more successful with *Rose Marie* than Edith Day on the other side with *Indian Love Call*. She seems to have sung too near the trumpet, and her intonation is not faultless. Kathlyn Hilliard's record is the better of the two, but on the other hand Sydney Coltham's *Rose Marie* is not so good as Derek Oldham's. Edith Day's *Pretty Things* and the *Minuet of the Moment* are both charming, and the other records of the set are worth having.

June and Jack Buchanan both dance better than they sing, but as a reminder of June's delicate charm and Jack Buchanan's engaging personality, this record will serve you well. Irene Bordoni sings *I won't say I will* provocatively. The Savoy Orpheans give realistic imitations of boy scouts, Salvation Army, and guards' band and pipers, playing *It ain't gonna rain no mo'*. A very spirited and amusing record. Cyril Newton's voice and diction are exactly suited to the songs he sings. Ella Shield's record is entirely delightful. Aileen Stanley is in the Isabelle Patricola style, but without that lady's abounding vitality. Norah Blaney's sweet voice records particularly well, and the Farrar-Blaney numbers are, as usual, full of pep and cleverness. John Payne's songs are not very attractive. Valses *Amoureuse* and *Bleue* have not lost their fascination, and are sympathetically treated by J. H. Squire's Octet. Rather a relief this gentle music sometimes.

F #

[Held over from June number.]

### Some Later Issues

**H.M.V.**—B.2022 (10in., 3s.).—Aileen Stanley: *It was only a dream and Alabamy Bound*.

**H.M.V.**—B.2040 (10in., 3s.).—Cyril Newton: *At the end of the road and Show me the way to go home*.

**H.M.V.**—C.1205 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Light Opera Company: *Gems from No, No, Nanette and Gems from Rose Marie*.

**H.M.V.**—C.1206 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Beatrice Lillie and Gertrude Lawrence: *Broadway Medley*.

**BRUNSWICK.**—2971 (10in., 3s.).—Billy Jones and Ernest Hare: *On my Ukelele and How do you do?*

**VOCALION.**—X.9523 (10in., 3s.).—The Revue Orchestra: *No, No, Nanette Selection*.

**VOCALION.**—X.9573 (10in., 3s.).—Winifred Dallé (soprano): *The Reason why and I look into your garden*.

**ZONOPHONE.**—X.4.42714 (10in., 3s. 6d.).—Sir Harry Lauder: *Music and Song and The end of the road*.

**ZONOPHONE.**—X.4.42715 (10in., 3s. 6d.).—Cecil Sherwood (tenor): *O Lola, pretty one, Siciliana*, from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni) and *Never did I behold so fair a maiden* (Donna non Vidi) from *Manon Lescaut* (Puccini).

**COLUMBIA.**—3672 (10in., 3s.).—Layton and Johnstone: *Alabamy Bound and I'll take her back (If she wants to come back)*.

**COLUMBIA.**—3674 (10in., 3s.).—Cyril Newton (baritone): *I've got a feeling for Ophelia and Where's my sweetie hiding?*

**COLUMBIA.**—3282 (10in., 3s.).—Fred Duprez: *An awfully nice fellow to speak to and I don't want my cigar to go out*.

**COLUMBIA.**—3696 (10in., 3s.).—Alec Saunder (violin): *Indian love call and Door of my dreams*.

The same singers reappear in this list as in those of previous months, and with Cyril Newton appearing in both H.M.V. and Columbia bulletins the risk of repeating one's remarks every time becomes greater. Like Aileen Stanley (now appearing with Vincent Lopez's band at the Kit-cat Club and the Hippodrome, and known in America as the gramophone queen), or Layton and Johnstone, or Fred Duprez, or Billy Jones and Ernest Hare, Cyril Newton is largely a matter of individual taste in song and singer. They all record with the same competence every time; the only variety is in the titles of the records and, sometimes, in the music; and as the accompaniments are always good, and the diction too, it is up to you, gentle reader, to buy what you can afford.

The appearance of Beatrice Lillie and Gertrude Lawrence in *Broadway Medley* on H.M.V. is notable. It recalls to those who have seen *Charlot's Revue* a perfectly exquisite scene where the two singers sit on a sofa and pass from one song to another to the accompaniment of an invisible piano and band. The singing is faithfully reproduced on the record, but if you have not the pictorial memory to enhance it, you may not grasp the fact that some of the songs, such as *Sally*, are meant to be burlesques.

Another striking record is H.M.V. C.1205, where the Light Opera Company sings all or nearly all the songs from *No, No, Nanette* and *Rose Marie*. The voices are not altogether attractive either in quality or method of singing. But the remarkable thing is the recording—the volume and the balance. They seem to me quite unusual, and I should not be surprised to hear that this record is historically important.

I am inclined to agree with the African natives of the Nigerian village at Wembley with regard to Sir Harry Lauder, though on other points I disagree with them. "They preferred the bagpipes even to Chaliapine and Harry Lauder. Indeed, they did not like Lauder at all," says the report. But it was one of Lauder's best, *I lo'd a lassie*, to which they gave the bird, not his *Music and Song* and *End of the Road* on Zono., which they might legitimately have found dull. I am sorry not to have enjoyed this; and I am sorrier not to have thought Cecil Sherwood's *Siciliana* very attractive—a cheap record at 3s. 6d., and his voice is, of course, first class—because I am haunted by the excellence of Tudor Davies' singing of it on Scala 4029 (4s.), that very remarkable record (with *Vesti la giubba* on the reverse).

Winifred Dallé is as good as ever on Voc. X.9573 in two rather foolish ballads. She has great charm and taste.

PEPPERING.

\* \* \*

**NOTE.**—The Editor's Quarterly Review of Records will appear in the August Number, which will also contain retrospective articles on Band Records by W.A.C. and on Dance Records by Richard Herbert.

\* \* \*

## MEMORANDA

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## BAND RECORDS

(May and June issues.)

- ACO.—G.15666 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *Hiawatha Suite: The Marriage Feast, Conjuror's Dance, and The Departure and Reunion* (Coleridge-Taylor).
- ACO.—G.15667 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *Sanctuary of the Heart* (Ketelbey) and *The Bells of Hazelmere* (Baden).
- BELTONA.—748 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—The Beltona Military Band: *Turkish Patrol* (Michaelis) and *King Cotton March* (Sousa).
- BELTONA.—749 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—The Beltona Military Band: *Cinderella's Bridal Procession* (Dicker) and *The Sutherland Orchestra: Pique Dame Overture* (Suppé).
- BELTONA.—750 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—The Beltona Military Band: *Cavalry of the Clouds* and *The Mad Major Marches* (Alford).
- IMPERIAL.—1389 (10in., 2s.).—Australian Newcastle Steelworks Band: *MacGregor's Wedding* (Campbell) and *The Laughing Trombone* (Walling).
- IMPERIAL.—1422 (10in., 2s.).—St. Hilda Colliery Band: *Overture to Faust* (Gounod) and *Le Retour March* (Thornton).
- IMPERIAL.—1423 (10in., 2s.).—St. Hilda Colliery Band: *Narcissus* (Nevin) and *King Peg March* (Giovanni).
- PARLOPHONE.—E.5359 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Parlophone Military Band: *Old Comrades March* (Teike) and *The Imperial Guards March* (Foss).
- H.M.V.—C.1195 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards: *Carnival Suite—Cavalcade, Pierrette, Harlequin, Columbine and Frolic* (M. Ring).
- VOCALION.—K.05159 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: *La Boutique Fantasque* (Rossini-Respighi).
- VOCALION.—K.05169 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: *The Emerald Isle Selection* (Sullivan-German).
- ZONOPHONE.—2550 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Horwich R.M.I. Band: *Libella Overture* (Reissiger) and *Slavonic Rhapsody* (Friedmann).

Coleridge-Taylor's *Hiawatha Suite* is not very attractive music, and all my efforts to find any magic in the theme or *leger de main* in the treatment of *The Conjuror's Dance* have failed dismally. The three numbers are played and recorded adequately, except that the cornets are apt to shriek if a full tone needle is used. The other Aco record contains a couple of pieces which I can only liken to some of the verse of Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

The Beltona record of *Cinderella's Bridal Procession* is so like the recent Aco record that I suspect that "Beltona Military Band" in this instance is merely a pseudonym (or in the case of a military band should it be *nom de guerre*?) for the Welsh Guards Band. That being so one's choice will be decided by the reverse side, which, on this record, is a very much cut but pleasant version of *Pique Dame Overture*, competently played by a small orchestra. The three marches played by the Beltona Military Band are all excellently recorded. The *Mad Major* and *King Cotton*, deservedly old favourites, are played with great verve. *Cavalry of the Clouds*, equally well played, is new to me, and I was at once struck by the aptness of the title, the piccolo having an important part in the instrumentation!

*MacGregor's Wedding* is an old acquaintance (I regret I cannot say friend) of mine. The re-labelling removes the libel on Mr. Edward German, but I still think that the "Bandmaster's Wedding" would be a better title! The two St. Hilda Colliery Band records are wonderful value at 2s. each. The only fault I find with the recording is that the trombones must have been badly placed as they sound miles away and the only flaw in the playing is that in the *Faust Overture* the penultimate note in many phrases in "Even bravest heart" is not given its full value, but played almost like an *acciaccatura*.

The *Imperial Guards* and *Old Comrades* marches combine to make an amazing record, if only for sheer weight of tone attained without a trace of harshness or blast even with a Trumpeter needle. I have never heard a less "gramophony" reproduction of a military band.

*Carnival Suite* is a very graceful and tuneful suite of five short sketches. I do not remember having heard it before,

though *Columbine* is reminiscent—of what I am unable to say. *Cavalcade* is a little monotonous, but the other numbers are very pleasant, while the playing and recording are what one expects from the Coldstream Guards and the Gramophone Company respectively.

I was delighted to see last month that the Editor had placed *La Boutique Fantasque* as the best band record of the quarter, as I had already earmarked it for further consideration in due course as the best in the first half of the year. I hope there will be a large sale for this record; the music is delightful, the recording could hardly be improved upon, while Lieutenant Eldridge's sense of rhythm is superb. Having exhausted my superlatives, I can only say that I am very glad to add the selection from the *Emerald Isle* to my own collection. It is an intriguing speculation as to how much of the music is Sullivan's and how much German's. I have not had time to find out definitely yet, but I will do so for the benefit of those interested.

Both *Libella Overture* and the *Slavonic Rhapsody* are bright tuneful music, and the playing is brilliant even if a little on the "light" side. I believe the *Slavonic Rhapsody* was specially arranged for this band by Mr. Greenwood, though other bands now include it in their repertoire. A rhapsody bears severe cutting better than most forms of music, but I cannot help feeling that two sides might have been devoted to it. I commend this record to all who want to know what a first-class brass band really can do.

W. A. C.

(June issues.)

- ACO.—F.33075 (12in., 4s.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *Aida Selection* (Verdi) and *Mignon Selection* (Thomas).
- ACO.—G.15684 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *Turkish Patrol* (Michaelis) and *The Mad Major March* (Alford).
- COLUMBIA.—9041 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards: *Reminiscences of Tosti* (arr. Pougher), Parts 1 and 2.
- H.M.V.—C.1199 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards: *Lustspiel Overture* (Kéler-Béla) and *La Voix des Cloches* (Luigini).
- VOCALION.—K.05175 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: *Capriccio Italien* (Tchaikovsky), Parts 1 and 2.

The selection from *Aida* is very well "strung" together, and, containing as it does part of the well-known *Triumphal March*, forms an admirable selection for a military band. It is both well played and recorded. The *Mignon* selection, however, is not so good an arrangement, being very scrappy. The airs contained in this selection are the best known ones, but only parts of them are played. Surely it would have been better to omit one altogether and play the others more fully. Even the famous *Polonaise* is badly truncated. The playing is rather nerveless, and lacking in attack. The *Turkish Patrol* and the *Mad Major March* are, I think, identical with the Beltona records previously mentioned, further comment, therefore, being unnecessary.

The selection of Tosti's songs makes a very enjoyable record. I have been particularly interested as it contains more than one air which I know quite well, but which, frankly, I had no idea previously were by Tosti. As the Columbia supplement says, the selection is representative of both his Italian and English songs. The brisk, firm playing, coupled with careful choice of the songs, makes the record singularly free from that trace of sentimentality which one might almost expect to find. I said a few months ago that this band had made a record of music more suited to Marek Weber's Orchestra. In this case the position is reversed: I do not think I should like this selection as I imagine Weber would play it.

*Lustspiel Overture*—a piece one never hears except in a military band programme—has some rather commonplace moments, though it is tuneful. The playing leaves nothing to be desired, while the recording is one of the best band recordings the Gramophone Company have ever done. The tone is very full and forward, and has a most realistic ring. I like Luigini much better in his ballet suites than in *La Voix des Cloches*, which I find very boring and characterless. Playing and recording are good.

The Life Guards have given us the best band rendering of *Capriccio Italien*, with its melodies and rhythms reminiscent of Italian folk-songs and dances, that I have heard. It is a desirable record in every way.

W. A. C.



## DANCE NOTES

By Richard Herbert

**N**OW at last, after threatening to oust the other ballroom dances for the last six months, the waltz and the fox-trot have the floor to themselves. This is the case, at any rate, so far as the gramophone is concerned, for this month's total of 102 tunes recorded and sent out for review is composed of 85 fox-trots, so called, and 17 waltzes. The blues we have regarded as dead and the one-step as growing increasingly unpopular, which is a perfectly justifiable conclusion at which to arrive if the judgment depends upon an *independent* existence for these two dances. But the term fox-trot has come to include a host of what are, to all intents and purposes, different dances. The controversy which raged, and, to a certain extent, still rages over fast and slow time for fox-trot music, seems likely to be complicated by two further variations. On two or three occasions during the last few months I have pointed out that if a list were to be made of dances in one-step time, it would be necessary to include many records which have been issued as fox-trots. It now seems quite obvious that the same remark is applicable to the blues, except that in this case it is among the fox-trots *alone* that blues tunes are to be found. This is a complex state of affairs. I suppose a partial explanation of the situation, which at least *appears* to be incredibly foolish, is that it is no longer a commercial proposition to issue new records under these unpopular titles. Devotees of these dances may grieve, and grieve doubly, because they are now compelled, as it were, to dance their favourites surreptitiously and under an alias, while other dancers are on the floor with them fox-trotting and possibly cursing them for their eccentricities and antics. Few people will dispute that both the one-step and the blues are quite individual dances with steps and movements entirely their own. Yet the ridiculous situation has arisen that if these steps are to survive at all they must be performed in the midst of what are regarded by others as different dances. But the actual fact is that the music which is most suited to them and until now has been used exclusively for their performance is now merely given a different name. To-morrow we may be treated to the spectacle of the fox-trot being danced to music played in any time between the one-step and the blues, as well as to the syncopated waltz—a heinous sin in the eyes of the waltz enthusiast—and the day after to-morrow, no doubt, we shall dance it to the unsyncopated waltz as well, and perhaps to Bach concertos and the symphonies of Beethoven. But oh! that that were really possible! However, let us come back to earth; this development, and the knowledge that many dancers pay little or no attention to the time in which the music is played, compels one to ask whether or not time is of any importance at all. This question sounds more ridiculous than it really is, because the expert can, without doubt, impart rhythm to his partner with very little assistance from the band, and almost ignore the band altogether. But few of us are experts, and there are few experts who will willingly ignore the rhythm that a good band provides, and will only be provoked to doing so by the infinite diversity of “times” which they notice from day to day. The difficulties of the amateur and the tyro are proportionately greater; infinitely glad am I personally that I am not just learning to dance to-day. Last month I said that it was up to the teachers to *invent*, in order possibly to save their own skins; I now say that it is up to the recording companies to make some kind of simple classification and to *lead*; because, in spite of all they may say about supply and demand, I believe it is possible for them to show the way, and it is a truism that supply will frequently create demand. The first thing to do is to find better tunes; the second, to get them played in some recognised time and to make mention of the fact on the labels.

This is merely a suggestion and an impartial review of present tendencies. Far from me is the desire to grouse, and particularly far removed is the inclination to do so this month, as there are many really good records to notice in detail although a large proportion of these were included in the late list last month.

It seems a useless and unprofitable occupation to go on lamenting the absence of the tango from the lists of new records, but there can be no harm in saying once again that there are many people who spend most of their time longing for tangos to be played, and many more who would make a serious effort to learn this dance if they were given the necessary encouragement and opportunity. Personally, I believe there are many who would buy tango records merely for the sake of *listening* to the tunes; but I may be misled by my own enthusiasm for them.

The question whether the waltz is really *gaining* in popularity seems to be a very debatable one; and were I to judge by a big dance which I went to the other day I should be justified in saying that it is almost dead. But the proportion of waltzes to fox-trots in this month's crop of records differs little from last month's. Delights are offered to waltzers of both schools and the excellence of both makes it an embarrassing task to make a final selection of the best record. **H.M.V. B.2012, 10in., 3s., Listening and Love's Dream**, both played by the Savoy Orpheans, just wins. As might be expected both are syncopated, but unobtrusively. There is very little to choose between this record of *Listening* and that made by the Hannan Band for the Columbia Company, but the Savoy Orphean's rendering seems to me slightly more subtle and at the same time more spirited. The tune which has a lovely melody in which violins and saxophones take chief part, is played rather quietly and in medium time. *Love's dream*, on the other side, is even better. An adaptation of a Liszt waltz, it is a perfectly enchanting and lovely thing. One cannot help feeling that a tune of this kind has real depth and significance, and it gives one nothing less than real inspiration. The Columbia record (3655, 10in., 3s.) has *When the one you love loves you* on the reverse side. In this rendering by the Hannan Band the violin part is specially delightful, although there is a full-toned accompaniment with a delightful repetition of deep bass notes. The tune has a vocal accompaniment—unusual with waltzes—which is quite above the average. For the devotees of the waltz *without* syncopation there is a gem supplied by the Parlophone Company (**E.5372, 10in., 2s. 6d.**), *Invano (Serenata)* and *Serenata D'Amalfi*, both played by the Bohemian Orchestra. The two tunes are a perfect delight, no matter whether one is dancing or not. Neither is played very loudly and both are really more suited for the *dance intime*, but they have plenty of rhythm, and the blissful state of unworldliness which they induce in the listener gives no chance for carping criticism of their relative unsuitability for dancing. There is one other waltz record which is also specially worth mentioning, and that is *Sleepy Hawaii* and *Come back to Samoa* (Col. 3658, 10in., 3s.) both played by the Hannan Band. The only possible adverse criticism that one can make of this record is that there is a little too much muted trumpet; but this is still a very general fault, and it is hardly fair to pick out one record to bear all the blame. Someone, I suppose, may say: “No fault at all; on the contrary, I rather like it.” It is then possible to dispute no further.

To place the best fox-trots in order of merit is even a more difficult task than the preceding, as there is no record which stands quite alone and there are many that reach a high standard. Perhaps it would be fairest to bracket several together, and let the reader make final choice for himself. **Marek Weber** presents us at last with a record at which no one can cavil—**Johnny and There's always time for loving you** (Parlo. E.10291, 12in., 4s. 6d.). About *Johnny* there is something almost Russian-balletesque; it is beautifully phrased and no instrument is misused. The number on the other side is a little dull as a tune, but equally well played, although rather more slowly and quietly. The other Marek Weber record issued at the same time is more than a delight; it is simply entrancing—*La Sérénade* and *Le plus joli rêve* (Parlo. E.10292, 12in., 4s. 6d.). The Savoy Orpheans have surpassed themselves once again, and seldom have played better than in *Oriental Moon* and *Too tired* (**H.M.V. B.1996, 10in., 3s.**). The first, which reminds one of a fair, has more individuality than most tunes nowadays, while *Too tired*, a poorish tune, is a perfect *tour de force* of playing. Dare I say marred by weird noises on the saxophone? **Kashmiri** and *My kid* (**H.M.V. B.2019, 10in., 3s.**) are played by the same band. The former, which is arranged on melodies from Amy Woodforde-Finden's *Indian Love Lyrics*, opens with a most seductive air and is in every way delightful. The Parlophone records made by Vincent Lopez are as good as anything that I have heard from that band, **Take me and Dear one** (Parlo. E.5366, 10in., 2s. 6d.) being especially noteworthy. As usual there is a splendid volume of sound and perfect rhythm. The Columbia Company supplies quite the best record, which I have yet heard that is devoted to tunes from *Rose-Marie*—**Totem Tom-tom and Pretty things** (Col. 3642, 10in., 3s.), both played by The Hannan Band, which is now playing better than ever and has the unique distinction of playing all the new tunes issued this month by the Columbia Company. Another good record, made by the same band, is *You're near and yet so far* and *At the end of the road* (Col. 3652, 10in., 3s.). The latter is specially notable for its beautiful strings against a background of rhythmical accompaniment. The Brunswick records are distinguished by their full volume of sound and the pick of a good bunch, is



**Arabianna**, played by Ray Miller and his Orchestra, and **When dreams come true**, played by Gene Rodemich's Orchestra. The **International Novelty Orchestra**, which plays for the Gramophone Company, is not very familiar to me, but makes good promise of becoming so. Their version of **Take a little one-step** (H.M.V. B.2001, 10in., 3s.) is easily the best that I have heard. It is a thoroughly good record, for which the greater part of the credit due certainly goes to the band. *No one knows what's its all about*, played by Jack Shilkret's Orchestra, on the other side has an intriguing opening, but ends a little disappointingly. **Paul Whiteman** returns to his best form in **In love with love** and **Lucky Kentucky** (H.M.V. B.2007, 10in., 3s.), but does not choose his tunes especially well. The former is quite original and intriguing, but the latter rather nondescript; the playing, which could hardly be bettered, is notably slower than usual—all to the good. After the exceptionally good run of records that has come from the Vocalion Company lately, this month's issues are a little disappointing. Easily the best is that played by **Geoffrey Goodhart** and his Orchestra at the Piccadilly Hotel—I'll see you in my dreams and **What a life when no one loves you** (Voc. X.9574, 10in., 3s.). Again it is the band that matters most.

There are three fox-trot tunes that are played so slowly that they should, strictly speaking, come under the heading of blues—*When my sugar walks down the street* (and *Too tired*) (Col. 3654, 10in., 3s.) and *Tiger Rag* and *Deep second street blues* (Brun. 2804, 10in., 3s.); the two former tunes are played by the Hannan Band, and the two latter by the Mound City Blue Blowers, whoever they may be. *When my sugar walks down the street* is quite a delightful tune—this record of it being the best that has appeared so far and played, incidentally, very much more slowly than the H.M.V. record of the same tune. The two tunes on the Brunswick record strike me merely as very poor farce—tricks, tricks, tricks, and ugly noises, and the less said about them the better. This is the *reductio ad absurdum* for anyone who likes such things.

There are also four fox-trot records which could better be classed as **one-steps**, and I give their names here for those who seek elsewhere without reward.

**Parlophone** E.5370, 10in., 2s. 6d.—*Dog on the piano*, played by the Arcadia Peacock Orchestra, and *Too tired*, played by the Parlophone Syncopaters.

**H.M.V.** B.1997, 10in., 3s.—*Bygone days* and *Show me the way to go home*, both played by the Savoy Havana Band (vocal).

**Brunswick** 2760, 10in., 3s.—*Honolou* (vocal) and *Shanghai Shuffle*, both played by Gene Rodemich and his Orchestra.

**Imperial** 1430, 10in., 2s.—*The toy drum-major* and *Shanghai*, both played by the Salon Chrystal Orchestra.

The best records are all mentioned above in the course of the article, and their names are printed in **heavy type**; second best, in *italics*. Those that follow in the list that is appended are good, but not of sufficient merit, by comparison with the above to mention individually, as space does not allow. All are fox-trots unless otherwise mentioned, and they are starred according to their comparative merits.

**ACO** (10in., 2s. 6d.).

G.15690.—*The only, only one* and *Lonely and blue* (both by the Indiana Melodists).

G.15691.—*I can't stop babying you* (Ohio Novelty Band) and *\*\*By the Lake* (the Old Virginians).

G.15689.—*\*Oh! darling, do say yes!* and *†\*\*Everybody loves my baby* (both by Jeffries and his Rialto Orchestra).

†Has a good vocal accompaniment.

G.15688.—*Tea for two* and *\*\*Leander* (good vocal), both by Jeffries.

G.15687.—*\*\*Alabama Bound* (good vocal) and *\*\*Close in my arms* (waltz), both by Jeffries.

**BRUNSWICK** (10in., 3s.).

2767.—*\*\*Honest and truly* and *\*Doo Wacka Doo* (both by the Isham Jones Orchestra).

2756.—*Dear one* and *Dreary weather* (both vocal) (both by Gene Rodemich's Orchestra).

2789.—*\*\*Indian love-call* and *\*Alabama bound* (both by Isham Jones).

2769.—*Oh! Mabel* and *\*\*Back where the Daffodils grow* (both by the Oriole Orchestra).

**COLUMBIA** (10in., 3s.).

3653.—*Suite 16* and *Don't put the blame on me* (both by the Hannan Band).

3657.—*\*Back in Hackensack, New Jersey*, and *\*Who is the one that you're fooling now* (both by the Hannan Band).

H.M.V. (10in., 3s.).

B.2013.—*When my sugar walks down the street* (vocal, Savoy Havana Band) and *Nobody knows what a red-head mamma can do* (Savoy Orpheans).

B.2014.—*San Francisco* and *Love's lottery* (both vocal and by the Savoy Havana Band).

**IMPERIAL** (10in., 2s.).

1431.—*\*\*Honest and truly* (Continental Dance Orchestra) and *\*\*A Waltz in the moonlight and you* (Hollywood Dance Orchestra) (both waltzes).

**PARLOPHONE** (10in., 2s. 6d.).

E.5367.—*\*\*The melody that made you mine* and *\*\*When you and I were seventeen* (both waltzes and by Vincent Lopez).

E.5369.—*\*The only, only one* (Vincent Rizzio) and *\*Show me the way* (Markel's Orchestra).

**VOCALION** (10in., 3s.).

X.9576.—*\*Lovely lady* (Miami Marimba Band) and *\*\*Me Neenyah* (The Ambassadors).

X.9577.—*\*\*Alabama Bound* and *\*Oh! Mabel* (both by Ben Selvin and his Orchestra).

X.9567.—*Totem Tom-tom* and *\*\*Leander* (both by the London Band).

X.9575.—*\*\*You're near and yet so far* and *\*Who takes care of the caretaker's daughter* (both by Geoffrey Goodhart).

X.9578.—*\*Keep smiling at trouble* (Ben Bernie) and *\*Sun-kist Cottage in California* (the Ambassadors).

**ZONOPHONE** (10in., 2s. 6d.).

2567.—*\*Rose Marie* and *\*Indian love-call* (the Romaine Dance Orchestra).

2570.—*\*I want to be happy* and *\*Oh! Mabel* (Max Darewski's Dance Band).

The records included in the list that follows arrived too late for detailed examination, which they will be given in these notes next month, but an attempt has been made to indicate the best by means of asterisks. All are fox-trots unless otherwise mentioned.

H.M.V. (10in., 3s.).

B.2023.—*\*What a life!* (*When no one loves you*) and *Oh, Flo!* (both by Jack Hylton and his Orchestra).

B.2024.—*\*\*Give me just a little bit of love* and *\*I know that somebody loves me* (both by Jack Hylton).

B.2030.—*\*Bouquet* and *\*\*Temple Bells* (both by Jack Hylton).

B.2031.—*\*When I think of you* and *\*The toy drum-major* (both by the Savoy Orpheans).

B.2032.—*\*I like you best of all* (Savoy Havana Band) and *\*\*Madeira* (Savoy Orpheans).

B.2036.—*\*Please* and *\*At the end of the road* (both by the Savoy Orpheans).

B.2037.—*\*Remember* (Jean Goldkette and his Orchestra) and *\*\*Let it rain* (International Novelty Orchestra).

B.2039.—*\*\*All aboard for Heaven* and *\*\*Let it rain, let it pour* (Meyer Davis' Le Paradis Band). This would be very, very good were it not for the nasal vocal part.

**PARLOPHONE** (12in., 4s. 6d.; 10in., 2s. 6d.).

E.10329 (12in.).—*\*\*May* (one step) and *\*\*Rosalie* (one step) (both by Marek Weber).

E.10330 (12in.).—*\*Marionettes* and *\*Smiling Moon* (both by Marek Weber).

E.5376 (10in.).—*\*While we danced 'till dawn* (vocal) and *\*Titana* (both by Vincent Lopez).

E.5377 (10in.).—*\*\*Nola* and *\*On the radio* (both by Vincent Lopez), Vincent Lopez at the piano.

E.5378 (10in.).—*\*Gloria* and *\*\*Ragging the scale* (both by Vincent Lopez).

E.5379 (10in.).—*\*\*Yearning* and *\*I'll take her back if she wants to come back* (both vocal and by the Tickle Toe Ten).

E.5380 (10in.).—*No wonder* (Emerson Gill and his Orchestra) and *I want to see my Tennessee* (The Lanin Orchestra).

E.5381 (10in.).—*I'll see you in my dreams* and *How I love that girl* (both by the Arkansas Travellers).

E.5383 (10in.).—*\*Alhambra* and *\*\*Sarina* (Indian Intermezzo) (both by the Edith Lorand Orchestra).

More Columbia, H.M.V., and Zonophone records have arrived like an avalanche, just as we go to press. Unhappily neither time nor space allows even a list, so they will have to wait until next month for notice.



# Gramophone Societies' Reports

[Reports must reach the London Office before the fifteenth day of the month for inclusion in the next number. No report should exceed 350 words, unless for some special reason more space is urgently required. Items from programmes must be incorporated in the report; programmes separately attached cannot be printed.]

**DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The April meeting was held on the 2nd, as the normal date would have fallen upon Maundy Thursday. Two lady members were responsible for programmes, Mrs. Field and Miss Levenston. On the whole it must be said that, in the records demonstrated, the level of the artists represented was higher than that of the composers, and that the musical standard fell rather below that of previous meetings. For example, whereas we should have welcomed Kreisler in a Bach, Mozart, or Schubert record, we were given some trivialities of his own composition. Again, Emilio de Gogorza's fine voice might surely have been heard to better purpose than in Tosti's *Beauty's Eyes*; and as one listened to Gigli in Toselli's *Serenade*, it was hard not to think with longing of his splendid records from *Mefistofele*. On the other hand Chaliapine's magnificent rendering of the *Song of the Volga Boatmen*, which aroused considerable enthusiasm, can never be heard too often. Galli-Curci is at her best in Bishop's *Lo, here the gentle lark*; and the quartette from *Rigoletto*, *Un di, se ben rammentomi*, is unsurpassable of its kind. We were grateful to Miss Levenston for including in her programme compositions by Weber, Mozart, Schubert, and Beethoven, who were represented respectively by the overture to *Der Freischütz*; *Vedrai carino*, sung by Lucrezia Bori (a most perfect record); the *Serenade*, sung by Charles Hackett; and one of those infinitely satisfying Beethoven quartettes so impressively rendered by the Lerner String Quartette. Side by side with these, such a work as Sarasate's *Introduction and Tarantelle*, although played with wonderful skill by Heifetz, gave one an impression of brilliance and little else. Elgar's *Pipes of Pan*, however, is worthy of note both as a composition and as a record; it is well sung by de Gogorza. Miss Levenston played on an H.M.V. plated diaphragm machine, which we were glad of an opportunity of hearing, especially in a pianoforte record, in which it appears to be at its best. In other kinds of records it was felt to compare rather unfavourably with the Society's H.M.V. mahogany horn model.

The meeting of the Society on May 14th was opened by the reading of an apology from Mr. T. H. Weaving, Vice-President, who was unavoidably prevented from giving his promised lecture on Gilbert and Sullivan operas. The disappointment of the members was, however, mitigated by the very enjoyable programme which was provided, of necessity almost at the last moment, through the energy of our Secretary, Mr. N. C. Webb. The first portion consisted of Act I. of Puccini's *La Bohème* (H.M.V.). Mr. Webb made some introductory remarks about records of complete operas which have been made, emphasising the excellence of those of *Aida* and *La Bohème*, of which he spoke from personal knowledge; he had heard, however, that the recording of *Faust* was the most satisfactory. The members listened with much interest to the excerpt from *La Bohème*, the playing of which gave some indication of the peculiar satisfaction which a complete opera, heard in home surroundings through the medium of the gramophone, can afford.

For the remainder of the evening a new procedure was adopted. Mr. Webb and Mr. L. J. Archer read out a list of records which they had brought with them, those present being invited to indicate which they desired to hear. It is not possible to comment on each of the 14 records played in answer to requests, but it may be said that the members showed a commendable catholicity of judgment both in the records selected, and in the way in which they were received. Thus, among those which met with most appreciation were such varied items as Purcell's *Golden Sonata* (violin and piano, Primrose and Menges), Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* (H.M.V.), Mozart's *Si vuol ballare* (de Luca), H.M.V.; the ballad *Edward* (Norman Allin), and Palestrina's *Exsultate Deo*, sung by the Vatican Choir. However, the saying that "old friends are best" (often a very doubtful criterion in musical matters) seemed to be vindicated in the opinion of the majority by the striking enthusiasm with which Galli-Curci's rendering of *Comme autrefois dans la nuit sombre* was received.—H. W. HARRISS, *Hon. Recording Secretary*.

**DEWSBURY AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—An open meeting of the above society was held in the Moot Hall, Church Street, Dewsbury, on Tuesday last, when Mr. G. W. Rolling, of Savile Town, provided a most interesting programme. The latter was made more valuable in view of the fact that all the records (some of which were recorded 15 years ago) were Pathé records and the gramophone was also a Pathé machine. The items were varied, some of which were a revelation. Especially may I mention *Creation Hymn* (Beethoven), sung by Miss Phyllis Lett; *La donna è mobile*, by Bassi, a really fine tenor; *Introduction to Lohengrin Act III* (Wagner), by the Pathé Military Band; *Students' drinking Chorus* (Offenbach), male voice quartette; *Il Barbiere de Seville, Largo al Factotum*, by G. Marie Summares, and duet from Act I, *Tannhäuser* (Wagner), by Carrie Tubb and William Boland. A vote of thanks was passed by Mr. S. Brasher, and in replying Mr. Rolling said he was only too pleased to have given the audience such an entertaining evening. The next meeting will again take place at the Moot Hall on June 9th, when Mr. Brown, of Batley, will provide the programme. On June 16th a meeting will be held in the Moot Hall, to elect new officials for the winter session.—K. WALKER, *Honorary Secretary*.

**EALING RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.**—Our competition for the June meeting proved a great success and drew the largest audience we have ever had. Not knowing it was to be a competition night, Mr. Benstead, our President, had broadcasted an invitation to the ladies and gentlemen of the neighbourhood to come and be his guests. Consequently before we started our chairman, Mr. Ross, explained the aims and objects of the Society to the visitors present, and told them that they were going to listen to a vocal and instrumental competition and see a prize awarded for the best in each section. To show how keen the voting was the first three in the instrumental received 93, 92, 91 respectively. Mr. Aylott gaining the chief honour with *Sonata in A, Part 1* (Handel). Mr. Paine was second with Auber's *Bronze Horse Overture* (London Symphony Orchestra) (Columbia). Mr. Brockway was third with the No. 2 side of the winner, a Vocalion record. Mr. Ross remarked on the fact of the close voting and the coincidence and judgment of the voters. In the vocal section voting was not quite so keen although it proved a great surprise, the taste of the voters giving the palm to Malcolm McEachern's *Tavern Song*, Vocalion, submitted by Mr. Jones. The second place was gained by Miss Bell with *Caller Herrin*, sung by Muriel Brunskill (Columbia). A hearty vote of thanks was accorded the president and chairman and other officers for the work entailed, and the chairman announced that at the next meeting, July 2nd, Mr. Ferreira and Mr. Brown would supply the programme with some new issues.—R. J. PAINE, *Honorary Secretary*.

**RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The members of this Society had an excellent opportunity of judging the qualities of the records produced by the Parlophone Co., Ltd., at the meeting held on Monday, the 18th inst. Notwithstanding the summerlike conditions there was a fair attendance to enjoy the recordings which included Haydn's *Surprise Symphony No. 6*, second and third movements, by the Opera House Orchestra, under the conductorship of Edward Moerike. Mendelssohn's *Concerto in E minor*, arranged for violin and orchestra, Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier, Valse*, by Marek Weber and his Orchestra. Other items were arias from operas sung by well-known continental artists. The Query Competition occupied the second half of the evening, when competitors were given the difficult task of formulating a programme from records specially selected and played by the press secretary, Mr. T. S. Allen. The highest possible marks were 40, Mr. Cox securing the first place with 30 points. Mr. and Miss Fittoll and Mr. Crook tied for second position with 23 points each. Mrs. Ross was third with 20 points. It is interesting to note that none of the entrants conjectured rightly E. H. Grieg's



*Wedding Day*, played by De. Groot and his Orchestra, and one only Poldini's *Waltzing Doll*, by Miss Marjorie Hayward.

The next meeting will take place at the Society's Headquarters, on Monday, June 8th. Intending members will be welcomed.—T. SYDNEY ALLEN, *Hon. Press Secretary*, 22, Deanhill Road, East Sheen, S.W. 14.

**THE SOUTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The tale of records that fail to find favour with the public and are withdrawn would make an interesting study. The analogy between publishers of books and those of records is very similar, inasmuch as a study of the public taste and a fostering of it is the prerogative of both, and the lack of sympathy of the record-buying public sometimes leads to the disappearance of many items that are worthy of better support. This has been the fate in recent times of Edward German's *Templer* suite and his *Theme and Six Diversions*, and it has also accounted for Sir Edward Elgar's *Polonia Overture*. All of this music has much to recommend it, and a late reminder took place on May 30th, when one heard the *Bacchanalian Dance* from the suite aforesaid. Whether German's music is at present under a cloud is difficult to say, but there it is; he appears to have done nothing beyond the *Henry the Eighth* and *Nell Gwynne Dances* in popular estimation. The name of Marcel Journet had been long absent from the lists until the issue of the *Nerone* records by H.M.V., when there appeared an interesting contribution from this much-discussed opera of Boito, *Ecco il magico specchio*. Lappas is not a candidate for the vacant shoes of Caruso, but he nevertheless sings the *Improvviso* from *Andrea Chenier* with much credit. Brahms has received a good deal of belated recognition from the recording companies, one result of which has been the *Sonata*, Op. 108, by Arthur Catterall and William Murdoch, the *Adagio and Scherzo* from which were heard with much satisfaction. Two contrasted items from the same programme comprised *Matona, lovely maiden* of Orlando di Sarro, by the Gresham Singers, a curiously out-of-the-way item; and César Franck's *Le Chasseur Maudit*, which on its initial appearance in the Columbia list heralded a new era in orchestral recordings, and which was perhaps one of the prime causes of the interest taken in doped fibre needles.

At a later stage in the evening's entertainment there were presented excerpts from *Die Walküre* by Mr. Burros, extracted from the Polydor and Victor catalogues, and introducing artists and orchestral numbers comparatively unfamiliar, including Friederich Schorr, Matzenauer and the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra. It is being gradually comprehended that the Polydor catalogue contains some very fine vocalists and uncommon material, quite superior in fact, to a great deal of both kinds that we are afflicted with in this country.

The meeting on June 27th will, to the extent of two-thirds, consist of Brunswick records demonstrated on a Clifphone instrument through the courtesy of the Chappell Piano Company, and all who are familiar with or desire to make the acquaintance of these excellent records, are cordially invited.—S. F. D. HOWARTH, *Reporting Secretary*.

**THE SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.**—The May meeting, held at Clock Tower Chambers, Lewisham, on the 11th, was again taken by our Mr. Baker, who this time had for his subject "Mozart, Haydn and the Orchestra." He did not go into biographical details but only reminded the audience of those facts in the lives of Mozart and Haydn which had influence on their works. For instance, in early life Haydn was poor, whilst Mozart was affluent; in each case their varying circumstance had influence on the music of each. What the lecturer did emphasise so far as Haydn was concerned was his jovial nature and how he loved to show this even in his composition. Temperamentally the two men were different and although to a certain extent they lived in the same period, Haydn being 20 years older had this advantage over Mozart, whilst Mozart had the advantage of Haydn's hard work. Then again outliving Mozart, Haydn learnt a lot from Mozart. We all know how great was Haydn's influence on the symphony; indeed, he is considered the father of the modern form of this particular branch introducing the four movement style which laid the way for the great works of Beethoven. All this and much more was dealt with by the lecturer, who then proceeded to demonstrate some of the characteristic works of each. Their treatment of the Minuet was shown by comparing two fine records, viz., the *Minuet* from Bach's *Suite in B minor for Flute and Orchestra*, and Haydn's *Minuet and Trio* from the *Oxford Symphony*. Followed an example of a Mozart minuet, in which his magnificent command of tone-colour was demonstrated; this was from his *Symphony No. 39 in E flat*.

All these served as illustrations of ternary form as well. Turning back to Haydn, Mr. Baker then dealt with the *Air and Variation* much in favour in those days. To illustrate this he annotated part of the *Surprise Symphony*, giving the second movement. The audience was next led up to the now familiar "sonata" or "first movement" form, and in passing the lecturer mentioned that for the novice the older symphonies were much easier to follow because being a "new form" in those days they were more or less mapped out for the novice of those days. For illustrations of Haydn's "sonata" form the *Surprise Symphony* (last movement this time) was used and then the *Adagio* of the *Oxford* followed to illustrate the introduction sometimes used. The evening closed in a high note musically, this being Mozart's *Symphony in G, No. 40*, to give what is generally considered to be one of this composer's best. During the remaining part of the evening, various topics were discussed and among the many new issues demonstrated were *The Erl King*, by Roy Henderson (Vocalion); *Ah! del Tebro*, by Pinza and chorus (H.M.V.); portions of *Don Juan* (Strauss); and Beethoven's *Eighth* (both Parlos.), all of which are outstanding records.—E. C. COXALL.

\* \* \*

With the call of the open air so strong, it must have been very gratifying to the Society's executive to find such a good audience to listen to the programme arranged for June 8th which was a comprehensive one in the hands of the President, Mr. H. Lewis, whose name is always associated by members of the Society with opera. And opera it was—in English. All things serious were cast aside and all was melody without a single item to tax the receptive faculties of the audience. Besides that there was a lot of it, and all one had to do was to laze and listen. Part I consisted of Italian and French operatic excerpts, amongst them being *The night was calm* (*Trovatore*), sung by Kathleen Destournel; *Spirit so fair* (*La Favorita*), by Evan Williams, who also sang *Like a dream* (*Martha*). Edna Thornton contributed *Softly awakes my heart* (*Samson and Delilah*), *The Secret* (*La Favorita*), and *The Habanera* (*Carmen*). With John Harrison she gave us *Home to our mountains* (*Trovatore*). In Part 2 German works were the chief attraction, notable amongst them being *Spinning Chorus* (*Flying Dutchman*), *Love Duet* (*Lohengrin*), a fine record, and *Dance of the Apprentices and Procession of the Guilds* (*Mastersingers*). But in addition there was a lovely record from Boughton's *Bethlehem*, viz., *Virgin's Lullaby*, sung by Elsie Suddaby. Pencils and paper got busy after this. As usual some time was given to new issues, amongst which were the following worthy of notice:—Brahms' *Student's Festival* (Columbia), Strauss' *Death and Transfiguration* (Parlophone), Massenet's *Scènes Pittoresques* (Parlophone), and the new records by the Irmel Ladies' Madrigal Choir (Parlophone). Future fixtures, both of the entertaining order, will be July 13th, "Ballet and Dance" (excluding, of course, fox-trots and the like). August 10th, "Selections from Mozart's Operas."

Prospective members are invited and can obtain full details from the Secretary, 128, Erlanger Road, New Cross, S.E. 14, but it should be known that the limit of the number of members has nearly been reached, so delay may lead to disappointment.—ERNEST BAKER.

**EAST LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The eighty-seventh monthly meeting was held on Saturday, May 16th, at headquarters, Langthorne Restaurant, 15, Broadway, Stratford, and, despite the hot weather, was largely attended. The first part of the programme was given by Mr. Tooley, who selected ten records with admirable taste. Although of various makes and music, every record was a gem in its class and it would not be possible to single out any individual one for special comment. Full of variety, a programme of this character pleases the various sections of members comprising a gramophone society, therefore it is not surprising that all present greatly enjoyed and appreciated Mr. Tooley's choice. Following this the Hon. Secretary demonstrated a number of the May issues. Space will not permit to deal too fully with these, but mention must be made of the following: H.M.V. No. 1994, *'It ain't gonna rain no mo'* *Fantasia*, played by the Savoy Orpheans. As a good humorous record it caused much amusement. The Parlophone Company are again to the fore this month with some very fine discs. This enterprising company seems to have a surprise in store each month especially in the shape of introducing wonderful sopranos to the English public. This month Jurjevskaja (Parlophone E.10278) makes her début, and her rendering of *Pamina's Aria* from the *Magic Flute* makes one hope that there will be more records to follow by this gifted artist.



*Scènes Pittoresques* (Parlophone E.10274), played by the Edith Lorand Orchestra, is good, and the orchestra has undoubtedly acquired the right atmosphere for the rendition of this charming Massenet composition. The Irmler Madrigal Choir (Parlophone E.10268) have scored a distinct success in recorded choir music, and the balance of the voices in Schubert's *An der Weige* (Lullaby) is perfect and the ease of the singing delightful.

The last portion of the evening was devoted to Polydor records, demonstrated by Mr. Cunningham. It is very difficult to make a definite statement as to the real quality of these records owing to the fact that the demonstrator experienced much trouble in finding a soundbox to suit them when played with an external horn gramophone. The large Astra and Peridulce soundboxes may give excellent results when used in conjunction with the internal horn machine, but by far the best results on the external horn machine was produced by a box with a small diaphragm, and Mr. Cunningham's obvious disappointment of the production of his Polydor records may have been turned to one of joy if he had been just as persistent in the use of the small box as he was with the larger ones. However, the proceedings were most entertaining, especially to the sound-box experimenters, and Mr. Cunningham greatly added to the enjoyment of the records by his descriptive notes of the artists, composers, and translations.

Five new members were made, and all interested in the gramophone should write for particulars of the Society to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. W. J. WORLEY, 209, Masterman Road, East Ham.

**THE BRIXTON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.**—The June meeting held at New Morris Hall, Bedford Road, Clapham, S.W., failed to provide an audience of usual dimensions, owing perhaps to a continued spell of fine weather, and the call of counter attractions out o' doors. The members' programme was in the hands of Mr. Hawkins, who presented a tastefully chosen list of records for our entertainment; space will not permit of me dealing with each item in detail, but I have no hesitation in commending the following: *Dovunque al mondo, Amore o grillo, Madame Butterfly* (Puccini), Hislop and Gilly. *How the King went forth to War* (Koenemann), Chaliapine. *Andante from Concerto in A minor* (Goldmark), Heifetz, and *Rondo Capriccioso* (Mendelssohn), Cortôt.

After the interval Mr. G. Webb continued his series of lectures, the subject being "Diaphragms," always a matter of interest, for who, at one time or another, has not been attacked by that feverish desire to find something other than the usual mica diaphragm, normally resulting in a quick return to sanity and mica?

An absorbing topic such as this entails devoting more time than is usual in the course of an ordinary meeting, therefore Mr. Webb will continue at our next monthly meeting, July 7th.

The last portion of the evening was devoted to playing an excellent selection of Parlophone records, the best being *The call of the Valkyrie* (Wagner), Elsa Alsen, and *Death and Transfiguration* (Strauss), Opera House Orchestra, the former being a disc that should appeal to all Wagnerians.

Will enquirers or intending visitors please communicate with Mr. J. T. Fisher, 28A, Fieldhouse Road, Balham, S.W.—S. N. COLLINS, Hon. Recording Secretary.

**THE NORTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.**—The joint demonstration given by Mr. C. Finch and Mr. S. H. Burden at our meeting of Saturday, June 13th was, generally speaking, severely intellectual in character. With the exception of the two old English songs, *Home sweet home* and *The last rose of summer*, which seemed to short circuit the magnetic personality of Galli-Curci, the programme was definitely "high-brow." The one item of light relief was *It ain't gonna rain no mo'*, rendered respectively by a band of boy scouts, an assembly of Highland pipers, a Salvation Army and a well-known Guards' band. Each of the above representations was characteristically comical, and provoked much laughter. This was, however, the one brief break in our otherwise solemn proceedings. Mr. Finch used a B.R.O.S. sound-box with steel needles. His outstanding records were: *Flying Dutchman Overture*, Life Guards' Band (Vocalion); *Orgel Symphonie*, an excellent organ solo from the Polydor catalogue; *Song of the Volga Boatmen*, Kedroff Quartette (Columbia); and *O Tu Palermo*, bass, McEachern (Vocalion). Mr. Burden submitted a selection of H.M.V. records from the works of Mozart, Boito, Schubert, Handel, Purcell, Wagner, Tchaikowsky, Mendelssohn, and Massenet; interpreted by such artistes as De Gogorza, Paderewski, Hislop, Ruffo and Galvany, Heifetz, McCormack, and Melba. The use of doped fibres was

essayed for a short time, but upon the question of their continuance being put, the audience set up a roar for steel that literally shook the walls. A cordial vote of thanks was passed to Messrs. Finch and Burden, and Mr. L. Ivory (Hon. Chairman) made some interesting announcements for the future which brought the proceedings to a close.—WILLIAM J. ROBINS (Hon. Recording Secretary), 126, Whidborne Buildings, King's Cross, W.C. 1.

## Book Review

**THE NEW ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MUSIC AND MUSICIANS.** Edited by Waldo Selden Pratt. (Macmillan & Co., 31/6.)

The scope of this excellent musical dictionary is best explained by an extract from the preface. The material is distributed into three divisions. "The first of these divisions deals rapidly with the form and terms of musical art in both a historical and a descriptive way, followed by a survey of the vast field of bibliography as concerns the principal topics. The second division gives the essential biographical and statistical facts about some 7,500 musicians of all countries who have been active during the past two hundred years, followed by a classified summary of the work of about 1,000 others before the year 1700. The third division presents succinctly a large body of facts about the organisations and institutions in over two hundred cities and towns throughout the musical world, including some information not before thus gathered together, followed by a chronological list of operas and oratorios that have been produced in these and other places since 1900." The gramophone is duly mentioned under the heading of automatic appliances and a just tribute is paid to the artistic value of recorded music.

The printing and lay-out are first-rate, with none of the irritating abbreviations that appeared in Dent's "Modern Dictionary of Music and Musicians." So far as I have been able to discover there are no serious omissions. For those who cannot afford Grove and require a really reliable substitute I cannot imagine anything better than this book.—N. P.

## CORRESPONDENCE (continued from p. 84).

### ARMCHAIR PHONATICS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I think Mr. Wilson's armchair soliloquy an extremely good one. It should be all to the general good to convene a round-table conference by proxy in order to arrive at a really authoritatively formed set of formulæ for the best possible reproduction of sound.

Nobody could wish more than myself to gaze on a sound-wave unadorned with the clinging draperies of mystery, but when Mr. Wilson states that "one can hear a sound round a corner where one cannot see a light," I really must make rejoinder that although this statement might hold sound, possibly light, and perhaps heat, it certainly does not hold water. The statement is consistently reversible, "one can see a light round a corner where one cannot hear a sound." In the first case we have the invisible light; in the second we have the inaudible sound.

It appears to me that we must find out exactly what fraction of candle-power is equivalent to  $x$  energy of sound before embarking on this perilous analogy.

Portsmouth.

I am, yours faithfully,

FREDERIC JACKSON.

[Note by Mr. P. Wilson.—"Mr. Jackson's amusing play upon words unfortunately ignores one or two important facts. Sound-waves are very much longer than light-waves; and they are longitudinal waves in air, whereas light consists of transverse etheric-waves. In my statement, which, by the way, was carefully qualified, I was referring to sounds of any ordinary pitch and to visible light of any frequency. Mr. Jackson is apparently referring to light of frequency so low as to be invisible and to sounds of pitch so high as to be inaudible. In gramophone work these are negligible. The fact remains that "it requires almost as extreme conditions to produce rays in the case of sound, as it requires in optics to avoid producing them" (Rayleigh, Sound, Vol. II., page 107). Sound-shadows are extremely difficult to obtain unless the intervening body is of very large dimensions."]



# NOTES AND QUERIES

[Each comment or question should be written clearly on a separate slip of paper and addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, W. 1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given for reference.]

(297) **The Immortal Hour.**—I cordially second Mr. R. B. Wither's suggestion that "The Immortal Hour" should be recorded, in full if possible. I also suggest that "Hansel and Gretel" would be a lovely opera complete on records. Also when are we to have Brahms' "Variations on a Theme by Handel," often performed at the Proms? Also the remaining variations of Tchaikovsky's Suite No. 3 in C, Op. 55, supplementing those on H.M.V. D.162-3?—M. W. B., Muswell Hill.

(298) **The Immortal Hour.**—For artists I suggest Arthur Jordan or Heseltine for Midir; for Etain, Dora Labbette; for Eochaidh, Andrew Shanks or Harold Williams; and Arthur Cranmer for Dalna and the old bard.—T. M., Halifax.

[A request also from G. H. B., Melksham.]

(299) **The Padeloup Orchestra** (May, page 469).—"N. P." makes the astonishing suggestion (which he mildly qualifies with "so far as one can judge from the records and one's knowledge of the orchestra") that this, one of the greatest orchestras of Europe, "is not nearly as good an organisation as, for instance, the Hallé or the Royal Albert Hall orchestras" (my italics). To have heard this wonderful body in the special performances of "Tristan" in April, 1922, at the Theatre des Champs Elysées, was to have acutely brought home to one the fact, of which knowledge of the score had long since made one aware, that in London one had, as far as the orchestra is concerned, to all intents and purposes never heard the work.—K. S., N.W. 1.

(300) **Broken Records.**—Will someone suggest a satisfactory way to deal with a cracked and broken (one side broken) Celebrity record? I have stuck with scotchone sometimes, but there remains a noise as of trench warfare.—E. M. S., Weymouth.

(301) **A Standard Gramophone Book.**—Is it not time we had a comprehensive standard work on the gramophone? Henry Seymour's was limited in scope, and what is needed is something on the line of Hopkins and Rimbault on the organ, with the addition of sections on the artists, the composers, and the manufacturers.—R. M., Stockport.

(302) **Isolde's Liebestod.**—... Neither of these versions (Gadski on H.M.V., Melanie Kurt on Parlophone) is anywhere near complete, and in the former the recording is atrocious. I am aware that it is an old version, but now that other extracts from *Tristan* have been recorded with such success by Florence Austral, could she not be allowed to make a record of the Liebestod in which the voice would stand in the relation to the orchestra which Wagner intended? And above all let this record if it is ever made comprise at least one double-sided disc.—R. M., Oxford.

(303) **Advertisements.**—I should like to suggest to some of your advertisers of gramophones that their illustrations which adorn your pages are frequently far from being interesting or instructive. I think advertisers would do well to make greater use of phantom sketches and phantom sketches superimposed on photographs. These with a few technical details as to important features, not forgetting dimensions and weights, should prove valuable.—An Englishman, Johannesburg.

(304) **From South Africa.**—It may interest your readers to know that to have a gramophone and good records, I mean operatic and chamber music, is a very expensive hobby over here. For instance, H.M.V. in this country are priced 12in., red label, 11s. 6d.; 10in., 8s.; buff, 13s. 6d. and 11s.; pale green, 18s. 6d.; white £1 2s. I see in your paper that your people sometimes speak about the cost of a record. Columbia: dark blue, 6s. and 4s. 6d.; light blue, 8s. and 6s.; purple, 10s. 6d. and 8s. Cheap, eh? Almost any make is obtainable in this country as long as one is prepared to pay. Personally I have not had the opportunity of seeing an opera, although I am only five years in South Africa and a native of Holland. Notwithstanding I love the standard operas and with about 100 H.M.V. Celebrity records including the famous Sextet D.Q.100, and the 1924 issue of H.M.V. (Opera at Home),

I am able to hear the best operas and singers at a moment's notice. I may add that my machine is a H.M.V. No. 190, and that I am thoroughly satisfied with this make and size. Could Mr. Herman Klein be persuaded to review a few records of the baritone Josef Swartz?—H. Van R., Noorder Paarl, South Africa.

(305) **Art Supplement** (see April, page 451).—I would like to second G. L. E.'s suggestion that you try to give us a series of portraits of the Old Masters, with an accompanying article as with your gramophone celebrities. But the value of such insets would be increased immeasurably if they were produced by, say, photography, instead of by ordinary half-tones on glossy white art.—C. F. P., Lincoln.

(306) **Clavichord Records.**—I should like to support Mr. C. F. Page's request to the Columbia Company for some clavichord music. The time seems opportune in view of Mr. Dolmetsch's approaching chamber music festival at Haslemere in August. Could we not also have the Dolmetsch family in some of the delightful old chamber music for viols, recorder, lute, etc.? An example from the works of Orlando Gibbons, who died in 1625, would be a most suitable beginning.—G. S., Leeds.

(307) **Folk Songs.**—What records are available of folk songs and what music publishers deal with the vocal and pianoforte publications?—W. L. A., Wallington.

(308) **Stars and Stripes.**—I should be glad if some member of the North West Gramophone Society could give me a little help of an astronomical nature. What do all the stars behind the names of records mean? (March issue, page 377). As a keen student of the heavens, I understand one star means a second lieutenant, two stars a first lieutenant, and three stars either a captain or a bottle of Martell's brandy. There are, I believe, 48 stars on the American national flag, and one day while walking down the street reading the current issue of THE GRAMOPHONE, I inadvertently met a gas-lamp and saw more stars than that! But what does five stars mean? Is a record so designated supposed to be five times better or five times worse than a record with only one star to its credit, or is it the other way?—Scrutator.

(309) **Tchaikovsky Trio, etc.**—I am surprised to find that the H.M.V. recording favourably mentioned by Mr. Mackenzie in the March number has been withdrawn. Is there any other adequate recording of this fine work? I am also surprised to find that a large number of the records in the programmes in Mr. Scholes' "Learning to Listen" (H.M.V.) do not appear in the 1925 catalogue. Possibly some of these are in the No. 2 catalogue. Why are Pachmann's records not in the general list? Exclusion must reduce sales considerably. There is now no H.M.V. record of the "Figaro" overture—a strange omission. The one deleted was complete and commended by Mr. Scholes.—G. L. J., Croydon.

(310) **César Franck Sonata.**—Will some reader kindly let me know the playing time of the Thibaud-Cortot records? I want to get some idea as to how much is left out in the other H.M.V. recording.—G. L. J., Croydon.

(311) **Elgar's "Sea Pictures."**—Which are the best of Leila Megane's records?—G. L. J., Croydon.  
[Try D.674 and D.675.—"Piccolo."]

(312) **Gramophone Covers.**—My H.M.V. table model badly needs a cover. Can one be made with cardboard, somewhat after the H.M.V. record boxes, only larger, and covered inside and out with a material that cannot take away the tone. The top must harmonise with mahogany. Would coloured leather do, and how could the cover be put on? In place of baize, would a leather turntable cover be good, or one of velvet? The rough felt retains dust.—E. M. S., Weymouth.

(313) **Chopin Funeral March.**—Is there a really good record of this? Would it increase the volume of my gramophone (H.M.V. largest table grand) if the grille were removed, or would it possibly spoil or coarsen the tone?—H. H., Gravesend.

(314) **Duplication.**—I have been a reader of your magazine from its early days, and am a great admirer of it. But there is one important matter in which I disagree with you. I refer to the matter of "duplicating." Personally I hope the recording companies will continue to give us rival versions of the same work. Such duplication is bound in the long run to give us better recording, and lower-priced records. Is it conceivable, for instance, that we should have got a competent recording of the "Seigfried Idyll" for 9s. but for the enterprise of the Vocalion Company?



Then the Parlophone Co. have given us Beethoven's "No. 7" for 22s. 6d., as against Columbia's 37s. 6d. I believe such competition will be as good for the industry as it will for our pockets.—J. A. V., S.W. 11.

[When THE GRAMOPHONE was started the need for variety of good music was urgent, and there was good reason to protest with vigour against duplication. But a close reader of the paper might have noticed a gradual dwindling of the vigour of these protests, and almost an acquiescence in the policy of each company in trying to complete the range of its own catalogue in accordance with that of its rivals.—ED.]

(315) **Squire Octette.**—Could you kindly tell me the instruments played in the J. H. Squire Instrumental Octette recording for Columbia and Aco?—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(316) **Harpsichord Records.**—It is possible that the H.M.V. harpsichord records of Mrs. V. G. Woodhouse have escaped Mr. C. F. Page's notice. I heard several of these, and in my opinion the recording is scarcely satisfactory. I was but vaguely impressed, and attributed this to surface noise, which in an H.M.V. record of this kind is a very distressing item. Columbia could doubtless give us a more satisfactory reproduction of this instrument.—F. C., Huddersfield.

(317) **N.T.A.**—If the needle swings almost to the centre of the spindle and the record is dead level, is the "needle track alignment" correct?—N. D. S., Kendal.

(318) What is the best angle of expansion for tone-arm and external horn, and what is the best material to use? Also, what is the best length?—J. H. S., Barnet.

[It is usually considered that about 15° to 18° is the best angle of expansion. But this is not a law of the Medes and Persians. Many other factors such as size and method of tensioning of sound-box, length, and shape of tone-arm and horn all enter into the question. A tone-arm which has a parallel-sided goose-neck requires a larger angle than a straight arm. The horn should have a gradually increasing taper; the H.M.V. is a good shape. A great deal of research is required on this subject before one could definitely say what is the best shape. But there is reason to think that the whole sound conduit from sound-box to outer air should have a continually increasing angle of taper from zero at the sound-box to 90° at the end of the bell. The longer the horn the more gradual will be the taper and the greater the width should be across the bell. There is probably some precise relation between the total length of horn (including tone-arm) and the width of the bell, but, so far as I am aware, this has not yet been determined. Roughly speaking, the width across the bell should be about half the total length from sound-box. A length of four feet with a two feet bell gives excellent results; there is not much, if any, advantage in going beyond a length of 8 feet.

The best material has not yet been discovered. If the horn were of the proper shape the material should not matter. In practice, however, it does, partly because the proper shape is not precisely known and partly because of the bends in the tone-arm. For use with fibre needles a drawn brass tone-arm and a metal horn seem to give the best results. With steel needles oak, mahogany, papier mâché, compressed cotton, and ebonite horns are all successful. On *a priori* grounds I should say that gutta percha would be excellent (it was imported in the first instance for acoustical purposes), but I don't know whether it has ever been tried.—P. W.]

(319) Is it possible to buy a fairly large papier-mâché horn? If so, where?—J. H. S., Barnet.

[This would probably have to be specially made. Try Unbroken Wave Company, Wandsworth, S.W. 14.—P. W.]

(320) **A Browning Record.**—In Sir J. Forbes Robertson's book recently published, he speaks of a record he heard made by Browning, in the middle of which, the poet, oblivious of consequences, ejaculated "Good God! I have forgotten the words of my own poem!" This must surely have been pre-gramophone time and recorded on a phonograph. Surely, however, it could have been re-recorded to suit present-day instruments. Could you tell me if this has been done, and if such a record exists, what is its make and number.—C. C., Oakleigh Park.

(321) **Ghost Voices.**—I have just bought "Le Chasseur Maudit." Playing it with the Euphonic needle it is quite easy at the conclusion of the work to hear the perfectly articulated remark, "Now that'll be all right." Can other people hear this distinctly with other kinds of needles?—H. T. B., Southsea.

(322) **Piano Records.**—I was much interested in the letter from Rev. D. Campbell Miller, "Piano Records," in this month's issue of THE GRAMOPHONE. We really do want more, and better piano records. I have just got Backhaus' two new records, "Bohemian Dance" and "Caprice Espagnol"; they are wonderful. Backhaus' records are far and away the best piano records, they are always clear, and never get into a tangle, and the touch is exquisite in its delicacy, but I do wish he would give us a Chopin scherzo or Beethoven sonata, or some Bach, which he plays so well; could you not suggest it to him? Moiseiwitch is excellent, but Backhaus is better. I wonder he does not record more.—E. M. W., Ealing.



## ANSWERS TO QUERIES

[Answers must be written on separate slips and should be forwarded to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Friar Street, London, W.1, as early in the month as possible.]

(123) **Records Wanted.**—"Ay chiquita" (Yradier) is sung by Suzanne Brohly, H.M.V. French list, P.222.—"Piccolo."

(152) Tetrizzini: H.M.V. D.B.540 or D.B.530, "L'eco" and "Grande Valse." Her "Mercè, dilette amiche" is excellent. Farrar: H.M.V. D.B.173, "Connais-tu le pays?" and "Mighty lak' a rose." Others as given by A. M. G.-B. in Vol. 2, page 188. "Gualtier Maldè," i.e., Walter Maldè, is the name assumed by the Duke of Mantua in "Rigoletto" when making love to Gilda. Hence it is the "dear name" that Gilda refers to in "Caro Nome." In fact, when that aria is given complete with recitative and final phrases, "Gualtier Maldè" form the opening and closing words.—"Piccolo."

(149) and (174) **Best Records Wanted.**—"Vecchia Zimarra": Mardones, Col. A.846. Note the philosopher's farewell kiss to his old coat. "Celeste Aida": Caruso, H.M.V. D.B.144. This is minus the recitative. If this is wanted, choose either Lazaro, Col. 7342 or Martinelli, H.M.V. D.B.335. "Credo": Formichi, Col. L.1579. "Dio possente": Battistini, H.M.V. D.B.196 (listed as "O santa medaglia"). Amato: H.M.V. D.M.106, duet from "La Forza del Destino" (with Caruso); H.M.V. D.K.126, duet from "Aida" (with Madame Gadske). All the 12in. solo records are good; the voice is inclined to be hard. The "Largo al Factotum" is delightful. D.B.636, "O vecchio cor" and "Sei vendicata assai" is a good double and the arias are not too hackneyed. Scotti: H.M.V. D.B.668, "Deh! vieni alla finestra," "Quand' ero paggio" and "Par ici, par là, mes amis." Scotti's recordings are old ones. The duets with Caruso and with Farrar are much preferable to the solos, especially "Solenne in quest'ora" (D.M.105) and "Mimi! è ver, siam qui" (D.K.111). Zenatello: I cannot say anything at present about his Edison discs or Fonotipia records. The best Columbia is A.5370, "Ai nostri monti" and "Periglianti ancora languente," duets with Maria Gay. Col. A.5399, "O terra addio" and "Miserere," duets with Destinn, is also very good. Blanchart: Col. A.5184, "Suoni la tromba" and "Solenne in quest'ora," duets with Mardones and Constantino respectively. The Bronskaja-Blanchart duets are good. Blanchart's voice is lacking in quality, so I do not recommend his solos, but his "Credo" is finely dramatic. Journet: H.M.V. D.B.310, "Demoni fatali, fantasmi d'orrore" and "Abbieta zingara"; D.B. 307, "Pif, paf, pouf" and "D'un sacro zel l'adore." For lovers of sacred music, D.B.309, "O salutaris Hostia" and "Les rameaux"; for those who like deep bass arias, D.A.259 and D.B.613, which give the two well-known arias from "The Magic Flute," can be confidently recommended. Of the many fine concerted numbers in which Journet takes part, I particularly recommend the trio from "I Lombardi" (D.M.126, with Caruso and Alda), the excerpts from "Faust" (D.K.106, with Caruso and Farrar), the duets from "Faust" and "Marta" (D.M.115, with Caruso), and the duet from "Mignon" (D.O.101, with Farrar). "Il Bacio": Hempel, H.M.V. D.B.298.—"Piccolo."

(198) **Aida.**—Col. L.1439 is an excellent recording and gives the best rendering of the "Triumphal March" I have heard.—"Piccolo."

(203) **Best Records Wanted.**—I limit myself to English lists. Destinn: H.M.V. D.B.222, "Morro, ma prima in grazia" and "O patria mia." "Un bel di" (D.B.647) is also a splendid record. Destinn's duets with Caruso (H.M.V. D.B.616), Martinelli (H.M.V.



D.B.333), Zenatello (Col. A.5399) and Dinh Gilly (H.M.V. D.B.593, "Doluroc noc, má Mila," formerly catalogued as "Goodnight") are all very good. Hempel: H.M.V. D.A.557, "Du meine Seele" and "Schlafe, mein Prinzchen"; D.B. 296, "Surta è la notte" (Ernani involami) and "Vien diletto." Most of Hempel's records are excellent. The comparatively unfamiliar "Robert, toi que j'aime" (D.B.297) is a charming air and D.A.248, "Qui la voce" and "Volta la terrea fronte" is a fine 10in. operatic double. The concerted numbers from "Un ballo in Maschera" (H.M.V. D.M.103) are superb.—"Piccolo."

(211) **Albert Hall Orchestra.**—A good photograph of the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra is to be found in the "His Master's Voice" "Instruments of the Orchestra" Pamphlet obtainable gratis from any duly authorised dealer.—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(272) **"The Starlight Express."**—I cordially agree with H. E. A., Braintree's remarks re "The Starlight Express," which was produced some years ago at the Kingsway Theatre, and only a partial success owing to the reason, I think, of being before its time. I feel sure if it could be revived at Christmas time it would hold its own against any other children's play. It was taken from that enchanting book "A Prisoner in Fairyland," by Algernon Blackwood, the four records we have are beautifully recorded, sung by Agnes Nicholls and Charles Mott (the late); they contain some of the best of Elgar's lighter music from "The Wand of Youth" suite. The duet, "Hearts must be Soft-Shiny Dressed," is a most finely balanced performance, and the organ-grinder's songs are perfectly sung and make one feel the loss the world has sustained in the death of such a perfect artist as Charles Mott.—A. R. F., Teddington.

(278) **The Fan.**—Make a proper blow-pipe with a very small opening and use the full vigour of the lungs to dislodge the dust. But are you sure the rattle is not caused by wear on the many joints of the transmission devices between the needle and the diaphragm?—H. T. B.

(279) **Wagner's "Ring."**—J. T., Manchester, may be interested to know that there is a book, "The Epic of Sounds," an elementary interpretation of "The Ring," by Frieda Winworth, published by Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1897. This contains a full analysis of the story of the dramas, with frequent references to the music and the motives, the principal ones being quoted. Not having THE GRAMOPHONE of October, 1923, I do not know exactly what J. T. wants, but send these particulars in case they are of any use to him.—G. L. J., Croydon.

(279) **"The Ring."**—I was advised by two publishers in the autumn of 1923 that the demand for my "Ring" book would probably be insufficient to cover the initial cost of a small edition, and I therefore let the little venture drop. At the time the paragraph appeared in THE GRAMOPHONE, to which J. T., Manchester, refers, I received three requests for copies, which I supplied hand-made and hand-bound, similar to the few that we employ like hymn books at our private "Ring" recitals here. If J. T. or any other "Ring" enthusiast likes to communicate with me, I shall be pleased to give him an exact description of the book, and, if required, to supply a copy if he does not mind waiting a fortnight or so whilst I am preparing it.—E. F. Newton, 87, High Street, Watford.

(282) **The Fifth Symphony.**—The two versions of the "Fifth" (not "Eighth") Symphony, recorded respectively by the Royal Albert Hall and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestras, are interesting to compare, but it is difficult to say which is the better rendering. The first-named version is far from being distinguished, either on account of the playing or the conducting, especially the latter, where we apparently have another instance of lack of sympathy between composer and conductor, which has been stated elsewhere. The German records, although considered old in the light of later achievements, do not suffer from this defect at any rate, it being obvious that there is a master hand at the helm. The chief fault is to be found in the famous bridge passage between the Scherzo and Finale, where the solo drum is inaudible; this, however, is heard to better advantage in the English version, as is also the following trombone work. To balance this, the other famous passage for the double basses is more finished in the German version, and so is the working up to and the Finale itself; in effect, the whole work under Nikisch is a revelation, apart from small defects, of what he could obtain. Personally, I should hesitate to dispose of the latter version, unless there was another, very good indeed, to take its place as an historical achievement.—S. F. D. H., Brixton.

(283) **Best Records Wanted.**—(a) Marie Hall's record (H.M.V., E.18) is excellent and cheaper than most others. (b) Squire, Col. L.1007. (c) Tertis, Voc. R.6017. (d) I cannot understand your objection to the Alda-Caruso version. Try Tokatyan and Raisa, Voc.A.0201. (e) I cannot help you. Elman's record is as loud as three or four other versions I have tried. (f) Bronskaja, Col. A.5193.—"Piccolo."

(283) **Best Record.**—The best record of:—(a) "Gavotte in E major" (Bach) with "Rondino" (Beethoven): Columbia, 12in., light blue label, L.1515, 7s. 6d. (Sir Henry J. Wood and the New Queen's Hall Orchestra). (b) "Le Cygne" ("The Swan") (Saint-Saëns) with "Berceuse de Jocelyn" (Godard): Columbia, 12in., light blue label, L.1007, 7s. 6d. (W. H. Squire, 'cello): (c) "Chanson Triste" (Tchaikovsky) with "Chant sans Paroles": Columbia, 10in., dark blue label, 3447, 3s. (Court Symphony Orchestra), or "Chanson Triste" (Tchaikovsky) with "Moment Musical" (Schubert), Columbia, 10in., light blue label, D.1430, 5s. (Yovanovitch Bratza, violin). (d) "Minuet in G" (Beethoven) with "Humoreske" (Sammons), Vocalion, 10in., 3s. R.6014 (Albert Sammons, violin). (e) "The Miserere" from "Il Trovatore" (Verdi), (duet by Destinn and Martinelli); with "Ah, si ben mio coll'essere" from "Il Trovatore" (Martinelli) (H.M.V., 12in., red label, 8s. 6d., D.B.333. (f) "Ave Maria" (Bach-Gounod), with "Caro nome" from "Rigoletto," Columbia, 12in., light blue label, A.5193, 7s. 6d. (Eugenie Bronskaja).—D. W. C., Salisbury.

(284) **Records Wanted.**—A truly modest request, which cannot be answered. Instead, I offer twelve excellent records containing among them most of the standard favourites. Here they are:—Amato (H.M.V.): (1) D.B.636, "O vecchio cor" and "Sei vendicata assai". Battistini (H.M.V.): (2) D.B.148, "Per me giunto" and "Vien, Leonora"; (3) D.B.149, "Visione fuggitiva" and "Ah! non mi ridestar!"; (4) D.B.150, "O casta fior" and "Ah! non avea più lagrime". de Luca (H.M.V.): (5) D.B.219, "Dio possente" and "Di provenza il mar"; (6) D.B.220, "A tanto amor" and "Ah! per sempre io ti perdei". Formichi (Columbia): (7) L.1579, "Credo" and "Te Deum" from "Tosca". Ruffo (H.M.V.): (8) D.B.464, "Prologue" from "Pagliacci"; (9) D.B.402, "Pari siamo" and "L'onore! Ladri!" Stracciari (Columbia): (10) 7532, "Largo al factotum" and "Cortigiani! vil razza"; (11) 7354, "Il balen" and "Eri tu"; (12) 7355, "Toreador Song" ("Carmen") and "Prologue" ("Pagliacci"). I prefer Stracciari's "Toreador Song" and Ruffo's "Prologue" to all others. If it is desired to avoid repetition of the "Prologue," I suggest that Nos. 4, 6 and 8 be deleted and replaced by: H.M.V. D.B. 736, "A tanto amor" and "Non più andrai" (Battistini); H.M.V. D.B.401, "O casta fior" and "Pauvre martyr obscur" (Ruffo); Bruns, "Die beiden Grenadiere" and "Blick' ich umher" (Bohnen).—"Piccolo."

(285) **Home-made Horns.**—Cardboard for horns should be at least one-sixteenth of an inch thick, and it should have three good coats of shellac varnish on the interior surface and a soaking coat on the exterior.—H. T. B.

(290) **Beltona Records.**—I know nothing about the records, but the singing of the Glasgow Orpheus Choir is glorious.—F. B. S., Hale.

(295) **Sound-boxes.**—The big Astra box shows the largest proportion of tone in the bass of the scale of all the boxes I know.—H. T. B.

(292) **Best Records.**—"Jesu, lover of my soul" (tune, Aberystwyth), Parry, and "Onward Christian Soldiers" (Sullivan).

(295) **Sound-boxes.**—The Beltona Peridulce is a good deep-toned sound-box on every record. Obtainable from all well-known dealers at 30s., including a packet of Euphonic needles and grip.—D.W.C., Salisbury.

(295) The name of the "first-class sound-box giving the best and deepest tone to any record played with it" is, in my opinion, Melomac, obtainable from Messrs. Russell and Company (High Street, Oxford). I do not happen to know the names of other agents.—R. M., Oxford.

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## Book Received

*The Opera Goers' Complete Guide.* By Leo Melitz, Director of the Stadt Theatre at Basel. J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 7s. 6d. net.

A volume in Dent's International Library of Books on Music, edited by Dr. A. Eaglefield-Hull. It contains 268 opera plots, and is brought up to date with a second supplement.





## THE NEW-POOR PAGE

Half-Crown and Two-Shilling  
records good on both sides



**A**T the Sign of the Brown Man!—During the conference on the ninth instant, readers of my annual "Gramophone Tips" will find me ready and happy to answer any of the little queries that may occur to them, and which are not completely dealt with in my booklet. All day, from ten to ten, on the 8th and on the 10th, I will be at home in Kensington to deal with long questions, if there are any, and to show my friends who read this page some of the beautiful and inexpensive records I have written about if they will favour me with a call.

The issue of records this month is again very good—most surprisingly good for the time of year, when most people are thinking of out-door sports.

**ACO.**—John Thorne's pair on one disc comes first—*Sigh no more Ladies* and Roger Quilter's most musicianly setting of *Blow thou Winter Wind*. Elsie Fisher sings the old *Slave Song*, very nicely indeed. **'CELLO**: Marie Dare might well have been more vigorously recorded in *An Old Italian Love Song*. **POPULAR SONG**: Billy Desmond, the sweetest of all singers of this class of music, has a charming rendering of *Rose Marie*. A good **BASS** song is Lewis Endersby's *To-morrow*.

**BELTONA.**—Specially grand recording is shown in the **WALTZ** pair this month. I have no better example of a *Dancing waltz*, than *Close in my Arms*. **BASS**: *I'm a Roamer* is well sung by Elliott Dobie. **POPULAR SONG**: *Adelai*. **ZITHER BANJO**: *Gallant Middies*. I first heard this record played with a small sound-box of most expensive make, and I thought it quite a duffer, but on trying it at home with a large box that did not suppress the resonant beauty of tone of the bass strings, it quite captivated me as a good example of banjo recording. **FOX-TROT**: *The Only, Only One*. Again this month I welcome an ear tickling record a certain kiddie I know will love—*Dreams*, waltz, played by the Palm Beach Marimba Band.

**GRAFTON.**—On these most beautifully manufactured two shilling records I find a **FOX-TROT** of abnormally fine musical quality, *Jealous*. The way in which the fine imitation phrases are interwoven one with another quite intrigues me.

**HOMOCHORD.**—**PIANO SOLO**: *Aufschwung* (Schumann), played by Maurice Reeve.

**IMPERIAL.**—I think all the **VIOLIN** solos on this useful two shilling list are safe. A good one this month is *Brahms' Waltz in A* played by Addash.

**PARLOPHONE.**—The glorious free vigour of all the recordings on this list is well represented this month. A record I most certainly ought to have mentioned last month is *Dog-on-the-Piano*, a strong orchestral and pianoforte **FOX-TROT**. Edith Lorand easily heads this month's half-crown list with *Sarine*, an **ORCHESTRAL** Indian Intermezzo. A good pair of **VIOLIN** Solos on one disc is Miss Edith Kelly-Lange's *Romance* and *Bolero*. **JAZZ**: A most interesting **PIANOFORTE** pair on one disc by the great Vincent Lopez is *Gloria* and *Ragging the Scale*. Another good record of his *Tittina*.

**REGAL.**—An excellent after-dinner record by Kenneth Walters and **QUARTETTE**: *Here's a Health unto His Majesty*. **MILITARY BAND**: *Tancredi Overture* and *Katja, the Dancer*.

**WINNER.**—An excellent lightly recorded **PIANOFORTE** record, *Waltz from Naila*, played by Miss Jean Melville. **XYLOPHONE**, ETC.:

*Ready and Steady March*; just the sort of thing to play on a portable out-of doors. Those who want things like *San Francisco* cannot do better than to get them as sung by the clear-voiced Fredk. Granger.

**ZONOPHONE.**—It is a great pleasure to be able to tell you that in common with the latest recordings of the Gramophone Company (on the H.M.V. list), these records now have a greatly improved surface, nearly silent and free from spottiness. Two excellent **DANCE** records this month are *Indian Love Call* and *Candle Light*.

From the foregoing for my own set of records at home I have selected:—

|            |                                    |           |
|------------|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Violin     | <i>Brahms' Waltz in A</i>          | IMPERIAL. |
|            | <i>Romance and Bolero</i>          | PARLO.    |
| Pianoforte | <i>Aufschwung</i>                  | HOMO.     |
| Soprano    | <i>Slave Song</i>                  | ACO.      |
| Baritone   | <i>Blow, Blow thou Winter Wind</i> | ACO.      |
| Bass       | <i>I'm a Roamer</i>                | BELTONA.  |
| Waltz      | <i>Close in my Arms</i>            | BELTONA.  |
| Orchestral | <i>Sarine</i>                      | PARLO.    |
| Fox-Trot   | <i>Jealous</i>                     | GRAFTON.  |
| Children's |                                    |           |
|            | <i>Record Dreams</i>               | BELTONA.  |

\* \* \*

May I express my thanks to Mr. Ellis of the Johnstone Talking Machine Co., Ltd., for assistance and facilities kindly given enabling me to make some of these selections.

**N.B.**—I have purposely refrained from giving catalogue information because I wish readers to get the lists containing any numbers they fancy from their dealers, and then if they do not like the pair on the record I have mentioned they may be tempted to try another record of the same series.

Everyone should remember that machines having small horns (resonators) will not respond fully to the tone of instruments having large resonators or large resonating columns of air.

H. T. B.



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